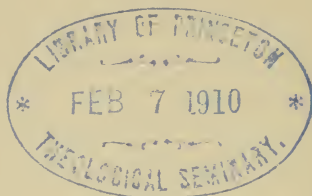


Malcolm L MacPhail



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The magnetism of the Bible

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THE MAGNETISM OF THE BIBLE

✓
BY

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A PRIZE BOOK

PHILADELPHIA
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To my Wife

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

This volume is issued by the American Sunday-School Union under the John C. Green Income Fund. The Fund was founded in 1877, by Robert Lenox Kennedy, on behalf of the residuary legatees of John C. Green, and with the cordial concurrence of Mrs. Green. Among other things, the gift provides that one-sixth of the net interest and income of the Fund shall be set aside; and whenever the same amounts to one thousand dollars the Union shall apply the sum "for the purpose of aiding in securing a Sunday-school literature of the highest order of merit." This may be done "either by procuring works upon a given subject germane to the objects of the Society, to be written or compiled by authors of established reputation and known ability, . . . or by offering premiums for manuscripts suitable for publication by said Union, in accordance with the purposes and objects of its institution." The premium plan is to be followed at least once out of every three times. The Union is to control the copyright, reducing the price of the book in consideration thereof. The individual traits and responsibility of the author are retained by giving him large liberty respecting the literary form, style and treatment of the subject.

This book, "The Magnetism of the Bible," digs in an old mine where new riches are always to be found. That it won a first prize in competition with many worthy and scholarly works indicates its freshness and merit. It presents a store of information and thought which fully justifies its title, making it worthy of the attention of thoughtful readers.

OCTOBER, 1909.

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PREFACE.

THE aim of this book is to present the Bible in a way that may secure for it a fair consideration. An attempt is made to show the excellency, not so much of the features which are more or less superficial, as of those fundamental and eternal values, which, when seen by the intelligent and earnest, will grip them. This will explain why debatable grounds are not traversed, except where it seemed necessary, either to make clear that the critical questions pertained to things not belonging to the vital features, or to assure that the vital features are immune against criticism which destroys.

No one will be more conscious than myself how imperfectly I have executed this design. The largest hope I harbor is, that there may be enough suggested on each subject to lead the readers to prosecute the study further for themselves.

I have found very suggestive, in the preparation of some of the chapters, Far-

PREFACE.

rar's *The Bible, Its Meaning and Supremacy*, Storr's *The Unity and the Variety of the Bible*, Moulton's *The Literary Study of the Bible*, and Halsey's *The Literary Attractions of the Bible*. Acknowledgment of indebtedness to others will be found in the body of the book. I have received, in the final revision, valuable advice from the Editorial Committee of the American Sunday-School Union.

I have not supposed that I have said anything essentially new. The forms in which the old is marshalled may have novelty sufficient, for a little while, to arrest the attention of some, and turn them Bibleward. This is my sole purpose.

MALCOLM L. MACPHAIL.

July 21, 1909.

THE MAGNETISM OF THE BIBLE.

CHAPTER I.

MIGHTY INFLUENCE ON THE WORLD.

THE human race may be regarded as a "colossal man" who has passed through the stages of infancy, childhood, youth, and maturity because of inherent upward-propelling powers; or it may be looked upon as such a being who has passed through such stages because of help from without. The former view will not account for the stagnancy of such nations as India and China, which were at the height of their supremacy when Odin and Thor were worshipped on the Saxon hills, and when the Druids burned their sacrifices in the groves of Britain. Nor will it explain the degeneration of peoples in language, literature, art, science, virtue, national vigor and religion, when left to themselves, such as happened

Inherent
power, or
help?

to Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome. The latter view takes account of and explains arrested development and decay. It attributes progress to Divine help. The high degree of civilization of the great nations of antiquity was attained through the powers from without supplied to man at the beginning. Their deterioration came through disusing or misusing those powers.

Subsequent to God's primeval aid to man, mankind has been helped chiefly through Israel and Christianity. This help was originally that of personality alone. The Hebrew personality was peculiarly capable of a moral and spiritual bent. But that personality, bent by God, was increasingly influenced by the holy men who preceded it, and that through the vision of life which their writings brought. The divine help, issuing through Hebrew and Christian, we may rightly regard as being, in a large measure, the influence of these writings.

In noting what that influence has been, it will be well to bear in mind that it has been exerted in spite of opposition. It will make the effect appear, as it is, all the more remarkable. The Bible has had to

overcome the opposition of rulers like Antiochus Epiphanes, who lived one hundred and sixty years before Christ, and Diocletian, who lived three hundred years after; the superstition of priests who burned its followers and cast them to the lions; the eloquence, learning, mockery, philosophy, sarcasm, sophistry, subtlety and vulgarity of men, who were either evil-doers or who lacked spiritual insight. Celsus, Porphyry, Hobbes, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Chesterfield, Ingersoll and many others have tried to discredit it or mar its influence. It has neither been weakened nor destroyed. "The grass withereth, and the flower falleth: but the word of the Lord abideth for ever." ¹

I. *Its Religious Influence.*

Upon the individual who reads the Bible, studies it properly, and listens to its interpretation and appeal, the effect is revolutionary. From it he will acquire the true knowledge of God, faith, repentance, the spiritual attainments of reverence, loyalty, co-operation with God, trust, joy, fortitude, hope and others. Carlyle

Upon the
individ-
ual.

¹ See H. Tullidge, *Triumphs of the Bible*, pp. 14, 57-62.

said that it was "the one Book wherein for thousands of years, the spirit of man has found light and nourishment, and a response to whatever was deepest in the heart." Matthew Arnold said, "The Bible has such power for teaching righteousness that even to those who come to it with all sorts of false notions about the God of the Bible, it yet teaches righteousness, and fills them with the love of it; how much more those who come to it with a true notion about the God of the Bible!" And its mighty, religious influence Buckle was constrained to acknowledge when he spoke of the "truths which comfort the mind of man, raise him above the instincts of the hour, and infuse into him those lofty aspirations, which, revealing to him his own immortality are the measure and symptom of a future life."

This influence upon individuals began in the home of the Hebrews and spread over the earth with remarkable velocity. Eastward into India with her philosophies; southward among the wild tribes of Arabia, and into the midst of Alexandrian learning in Egypt; northward and westward across the Mediterranean into the polished centers of Greece, into lordly Rome and

Carthage, farther off into the wild regions of Spain, Gaul and Britain, into Gothic lands and the inclement Russian fastnesses, and later to the newly discovered lands of America and Australia. Wider still has the Bible influence been spread in more modern times. China is listening to the Word; Japan, Siam and Korea have opened their door to the apostles; the South Sea islands through it have forsaken cannibalism, and it is equally sought by the American Indian and the Bushman of Africa.¹

The Bible's religious influence on the nations, in all spheres of the people's activity, is a consequent of the influence upon the individual. J. H. Green, speaking of the giving of the English Bible to the people, says, "The effect of the Bible in this way was simply amazing. The whole temper of the nation was changed. A new conception of life and man superseded the old. A new moral and religious impulse spread through every class." What was true of England has been true of all lands where the Bible has gone, in so far as its benign rays have been allowed to penetrate.

National
influ-
ence.

¹ See Tullidge, *op. cit.*, pp., 23, 24.

II. *Its Moral Influence.*

Morality
in other
books.

The morality of the Bible is religious, yet the Book has a moral influence apart from its religious influence. The influence of the books of all the great religions has been very wide. There have been many individual moralists whose teachings were influential. In many or all of those books there are truths which have floated down from the beginning, on the wings of tradition and conscience, and their influence has been beneficent. But in all the pagan religious books these primal truths are overshadowed. In Mohammedan morals the sensuous predominates; in Brahmin and Buddhist the ascetic; in Chinese the naturalistic. The Greeks based their morals on intelligence and knowledge. The morality of materialists and positivists is at best only utilitarian.

Pagan
society
immoral.

To see in its full extent the moral influence effected by the Bible, we need but recall the conditions existing in certain lands before the Bible entered them, or before its teachings got full sway. *Rulers* were tyrannical, cruel, unjust, aggressive, oppressive, capricious, and jealous. Under their rule the wealthy, famous and virtuous were in constant peril. Only the poor,

infamous and vicious were safe. *Justice* was without equity. There was partiality and lack of proportion in administering punishment. "Wager of battle" and torture frequently determined guilt. Might and trickery often made right. *Human life* was not regarded as of essential worth. Human sacrifices were often part of religious worship. The weak and aged were allowed to die from starvation and exposure, and this was approved even by Aristotle, Plato, Seneca and Cicero, and ordered by Lycurgus. The body was not looked upon as the "temple of the Spirit," but was given up to sins unknown in Christian countries to-day. *The family* was an empty name. "Free marriage," divorce and concubinage were the rule. *Brotherhood* was practically unknown. Slavery existed everywhere. Private wars, feuds and duels were always going on. Gladiatorial shows, especially in Rome, showed the absence of the conception of human unity. There was no sympathy for the poor, sick, imprisoned and unfortunate of any kind. Dr. Harris in his "Great Commission," speaking of Christianity, says, "Her coming found the heathen world without a house of mercy."

Christian
society
moral.

The Christian civilization of to-day has all this changed. It has in it the conception of righteous authority; justice; democracy; the sacredness of life, whether of man, woman or child; a pure home, wherein love dwelleth; the principles of the Second Mile and the Golden Rule. It lives out these ideas, as is evidenced by the reproofs given to immorality; and by the initiation and inspiration of reforms in the conduct of individuals, in all their relationships, and in that of combinations, public institutions and governments, in all their transactions and attitudes.¹

The Bible
the
source.

The Bible has been the means of the change. It gives exhaustive moral generalizations, definite and concrete laws of action, the motives and hidden springs of action. There is more true morality taught and incomparably more good derived from even one of Paul's Epistles than all the books of pagan religions. The great prophets of Christendom, through whose inspirations reforms have come, are but repeaters of Amos and Micah. The Puritan influence has come to us from men and women who tried to live again the order, pure liberty, righteousness and truth laid

¹ See Brace, *Gesta Christi*, for full discussion.

down by Moses. The teachers of society drink their insight, force and breadth from prophet, apostle and Lord. Buckle confesses that Christianity is a "vast and noble institution, by which the manners of men have been softened, their sufferings assuaged and their distresses relieved." And William Lloyd Garrison says, "Take away the Bible from us and our warfare against intemperance and impurity and oppression and infidelity and crime is at an end. We have no authority to speak, we have no courage to act."

III. *Its Educational Influence.*

The educational influence of the Bible is more widely and thoroughly felt than that of any other book. There is no other book of which so many copies have been made, or are annually printed and distributed. No book is printed in so many languages, read so much, and known so well.¹ None has entered so fundamentally into the thought and speech of the world. Men have got their figures of speech, proverbs, and household terms from it.

**Extensive
and in-
tensive.**

General intelligence is more widespread

¹ See Dr. E. W. Rice, *Our Sixty-Six Sacred Books*, Chap. XIII.

among the people of the Christian world than among the inhabitants of pagan lands. Through Israel the world gained possession of the truths concerning God, the Creation, the World, Providence, Righteousness, Duty, Judgment and Immortality. These truths are so noble, universal, far-reaching and sublime that the imagination, intellect and heart are laid hold of, expanded and disciplined. And it is not a bare statement of the truths which the Bible makes. It at times adorns them; at times enfolds them in a shell; at times suggests them. It is full of allusions, incomplete statements and implications which lead one into the study of history, geography, antiquities, law and theology, if one would understand its contents. There is hardly a verse but what suggests something beyond itself. The commandments, the history, the natural science, the doctrine, and the revelation, for example, are such as to excite inquiry. And the true method of investigation it has given, as well as the desire to investigate. It taught men to observe facts, and not to depend alone on abstract principles. "The road to true philosophy," says Bacon, "is precisely the same with that which leads to true religion;

and from both one and the other, unless we would enter as little children, we must expect to be excluded." The one idea found in the Bible we may well believe to have suggested the other. The father of the modern scientific method got his method in the Book.¹ Because of the enlightening character of the Bible, the nations possessing it fully are inquiring and educated.

That the Bible is the source of modern enlightenment seems to be verified by the facts. Where there is no Book there is the darkness of Africa and the Isles. Where commercial relations of Christian countries have come with pagan countries, those dark lands have improved. Higher than paganism is Islamism; it has some of the Bible. Higher still is Romanism; it has some instruction from the whole Bible. Highest of all is Protestantism; it has the Bible in the hands of all the people. The civilization of the countries of Europe has kept step with their grasp of the Scriptures.

The history of Spain and Scotland will illustrate this. Why is it that to-day there is scarcely a country so poor as to do Spain

Illustrated
by His-
tory.

¹ See Tullidge, *Triumphs of the Bible*, pp. 53-57, and J. S. Hart, *The Bible as an Educating Power Among the Nations*, pp. 13-63.

reverence, and none so advanced as not to honor Scotland, with her unsurpassed list of names in every department of knowledge? It may be urged that the tardy progress of the former has been due to false economic conditions, a bad system of land-ownership, and the consequent unprogressive industrial conditions and poverty of the people. The lack of a strong national spirit, and the temperament of the people may be put forth as additional reasons. Having given due weight to these causes, it does not seem unlikely that a more far-reaching one is Spain's failure to enjoy a blessing such as Scotland received, when in 1575 an edition of the Bible was published there, placed within reach of the common people, and never closed to them.

The probability of this is borne out by the similar contrast between the other Protestant countries of Europe, such as England, Germany and Holland, and Romish countries like Portugal, Austria and Italy; or between the Protestant countries of America,—the United States and Canada, and their Papal neighbors,—Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela, etc. Any approaching enlightenment in those backward countries may be traced to the influence of the Bible,

as in Italy it may be traced to the work of the Waldenses in spreading the Word.¹

In Japan and other pagan countries the enlightenment has come from contact with Christian lands. In making an address on "The Awakening of China" in New York on May 5, 1908, Wu Ting Fang, one of China's ablest and best-known statesmen, said, "Nor must I omit to mention the services of the missionary body, particularly the American branch of it, whose indefatigable efforts in the establishment of educational institutions, and in the diffusion of literature of general knowledge formed a part of the leaven, which has leavened the whole empire of China."

This is the influence of the Bible; and as contact with it grows is that enlightenment being intensified. Truthfully did Lessing speak when he said, "The Scriptures for 1700 years have occupied the mind more than all books, have enlightened it more than all other books."

IV. *Its Artistic Influence.*

The literature of the pagan world includes Homer; its architecture, the Parthe-

Greek or
Hebrew ?

¹ See S. D. Brown, *The Bible the Source of True Civilization*, pp. 8-34.

non; its sculpture, the Zeus of Phidias. To a large degree the art of the ancients has been the inspiration of the moderns. But our obligation to them may be emphasized at the expense of the Scriptures, to which the civilized world is more indebted. The Renaissance was the rebirth of learning and art. It followed the Crusaders' tours through classic lands. But it was coeval with the rise of Protestantism, when the Bible became a popular book. It was the Christian intellect, awakened by the study of the Scriptures, that produced the Renaissance.

Literature. The Bible is the background of modern literature. The purity, wisdom, spirit, and weight which belong to the great writers have been drawn from it. It has taught writers the secret of vigor, originality and influence. It has given suggestive examples of diction and composition. It has afforded models in the writing of history, poetry and story. It has been a fountain for poets more inspiring than any Grecian, Roman, Norse or Celtic one. It has fixed languages.

Evidence of this is seen in Spenser, Bacon, Addison, Johnson, Dickens, Scott, Wordsworth, Ruskin, Browning and Ten-

nyson. Daniel Webster once said, "If there be anything in my style or thought to be commended, the credit is due to my kind parents, in instilling into my mind an early love of the Scriptures." Hall Caine confesses that the plots of his great novels have been suggested by Bible stories. And what is true of his books is true of all other great modern books, in all Christian lands and in every field of literature. They are saturated with the Book. They are its seed, sprung up in a variety of beautiful and worthy forms.

What is true of literature is true also of architecture, sculpture, painting and music. The Bible created the cathedrals and their statuary, mosaics and paintings,—the world's masterpieces. Biblical themes are the subjects of, and the spirit of the Bible breathes through, the world's great oratorios. The great architects like Brunelleschi and Giotto, and the guildmen who built the cathedrals, worked from the motive of piety. The great sculptors like Donatello and Michelangelo, and the great painters like Raphael and Correggio, took Bible figures for their models. The great music-composers like Bach and Haydn rose from their knees to carry out

Architec-
ture,
sculp-
ture, etc.

their work. The triumphs of the world's architecture bear the name of the Apostles. The world's best sculpture presents incidents from Genesis and the Gospels. The greatest paintings are portraits of the Madonna and the Child. The world's music reaches its climax in the "Creation" and the "Messiah."

It is the Bible that has originated the added features of loveliness imposed upon nature. We see its hand of beauty where sterility once was. Its fruit is in the palace with its adornments; in the public garden; and in the stately ships. Ruskin, before whom as an art critic the world bows, says, "Certainly, by consent of all, there has been thus far no art in the world like the Christian art."

V. *Its Influence in Affairs.*

Labor.

As nations were Christianized the men stopped pulling the plow, and the women ceased being the burden-bearers, while the horse and the ox were put to work. As civilization advanced, through a closer observation of nature, and an increasing desire to save time, and with a growth of the humane spirit, man and beast were, to a great extent, supplanted by machinery.

With the coming of a still higher state, the hours in which man must work are being shortened.

This relief from toil is not a contempt for labor. The Book which has inspired it, to the contrary, condemns slothfulness and dignifies work. Its grandest figure is a Carpenter, and his followers are fishermen. The disengagement from drudgery which it encourages, wherever it can be made, is in order to give opportunity for nobler work, and for the intellectual and moral well-being. Machines cause inconvenience to millions for a time, but in the end always bring them a blessing, in the form of more life-sparing kinds of work. The Bible works to make a way to build the man. It is the spirit behind the movement for better wages and for profit-sharing.

Commerce has always followed in the wake of Christianity. The Crusades gave an impetus to traffic. Modern missions are clearing the way for the manufacturer. **Commerce.**

As the touch of the new life is felt, the worth of self is apprehended. Comfort, culture and refinement make new wants. The Bible does not approve of the luxury which springs from depraved appetite, and

which produces a traffic like that of ancient Rome. It increases the legitimate wants of all classes, increasing their means at the same time, and is therefore a greater friend of commerce than any ever possessed by Rome.

The Christian missionary is the world's pioneer. The knowledge we possess of the geography, customs and language of many lands we owe to the missionary. This knowledge is one of the most important assets of the merchant.

The Bible develops man's love for the world and for mankind. It makes him long to visit the various countries of the earth, and know their history. It impels him to keep up acquaintances. It creates a desire to share in the products of different climes. Thus travel, the press, the telegraph and postal systems, agriculture, manufacture, shipping, etc., are stimulated.

Not only has commerce been influenced as to quantity, but also as to character. It used to be the exploiting of the colony for the enrichment of the empire. Merchants and nations took advantage of the ignorance and weakness of non-Christian peoples. The higher principles of morality de-

mand that the ephah be full size, and that the traffic in rum and opium shall cease.

As in the industrial and commercial affairs of men the Bible has been such a powerful influence, so also in their political affairs. Two thousand years before Magna Charta it defined the rights of the people and the powers of princes. It definitely announced at that early date the principles of the authority and fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the worth of life; all of which involved good government, liberty, equal privilege, constitutional law for the protection of property, freedom and life. It gives illustrations of the practical operation of many of these principles.¹

Law and
govern-
ment.

Modern jurisprudence has been influenced much by Attic and Roman laws; but according to Grotius, the great authority on international law, these owe their origin to the laws of Moses. George Adam Smith makes a similar statement when he says, "The influence of Mosaic law on legislation and public morals which began with Constantine and from his time to Justinian's, according to authorities like Gibbon, purged social life and modified the law of the empire."²

¹ See W. Magill, *The Achievements of the Bible*, pp. 8, 9.

² *Biblical World*, vol. 8, p. 91.

The laws of Moses have also influenced modern government directly. The writer just quoted, says that the young Christian nations had the example of the Jewish people before them leading them on in the struggle for freedom. "Stealthier than the growth of a forest," says De Quincey, "are the footsteps of Christianity amongst the political workings of man." Blackstone, in his Commentaries, says, "The Bible has always been regarded as part of the Common Law of England." And President Andrew Jackson on his death-bed, pointing to the Bible, said to his physician, "That Book, sir, is the Rock on which our Republic rests."

CHAPTER II.

AMONG THE SACRED BOOKS.

“TOLERANCE” and “broad minded- Tolerance. ness” are words with which to conjure to-day. That man is considered by many brave and fair, who has courage to place other religions on a level with his own. The statements are often made that Christianity and other religions are essentially the same, the difference being in outward form or in standpoint; that other religions are as good for their followers as Christianity is for us; that it is wrong to try to force our religion on them, when their own are so sublime in their conceptions; that, indeed, ours is scarcely superior, being largely derived from theirs. Our magazines often have articles which teach these ideas. Our clubs frequently have for star-speakers Hindus, or others, who inform us of these things.

It is doubtless a fact that there are many truths and laws in all the great relig-

ions which are revelations from God. But it is likewise true, as we shall endeavor to show, that these revelations are markedly less perfect than those of the Bible, and that they are mixed up with “so much that is not only unmeaning, artificial and silly, but even hideous and repellent.”¹

Religions
tested by
their
books.

Because of the influence of nation upon nation through the modern facilities of travel, an influence which modifies the life, thought and practices of all nations, and especially because of the influence of the Bible on other religions, we shall not be able to compare the religions in their essentials so well by examining them, as we find them to-day, as we shall be by comparing their sacred books with the Bible.

Within the limits of this chapter we shall be compelled,—and there would be little practical benefit from doing otherwise,—to confine ourselves to the books of the great religions now extant.

I. *Of Hinduism.*

The sacred books of the Hindus are the Vedas, the Shastras, the Puranas and the Tantras. This is the general order in

¹ F. Max Müller, *The Sacred Books of the East*, vol. I. p. xii.

which they were written; and, read in this order, we can see the development of the religion.

The Vedas are the most ancient, and contain the purest form, of the Hindu religion. They contain an account of the Creation, of the Fall and Deluge. Cropping out frequently is the idea of one supreme God; but, generally, the idea is pantheistic, and, as a result, the worship is a nature worship. Light, thunder, fire, rain, the vault of the heavens and many other aspects of nature are deified. They have many gods. One god is supreme according to one poet; another, to another. There is no image worship; but worship at its best is a kind of barter, and at its lowest descends in the Atharva, or Brahma Veda, to imprecations, charms, talismans, and even a form of demon worship.

The Vedas.

The Shastras are the philosophical books. They attempt to solve the problems of life and destiny, but fail. They have many subtle and sublime utterances; but contain a great mass of fanciful and puerile matter, and in many instances descend to the prurient. They teach transmigration of souls, annihilation and the absorption of the individual into the infinite. Some

The
Shastras.

ideas are theistic, some atheistic; but the general trend is pantheistic, and inculcates absolute idealism or the non-existence of matter.

The Pur-
anas.

The Puranas contain a rearranged Hinduism. They have an entirely new set of gods. Now the gods are not the merely natural forces, but the active and potent abstract thoughts, principles and emotions. They have a Trimurti, or triad of gods, but they praise now one god and now another. Transmigration and caste, almost unknown in the Vedas, are here. Here also we have widow burning introduced. The idea of the incarnation of deity appears. They tell us that the supreme god Vishnu has appeared on earth ten times. At one time he came as a fish, once as a boar, once as a tortoise. Rama and Krishna, great soldier heroes, they regard as incarnations of Vishnu, so also Gautama the founder of Buddhism. In the Puranas, Hinduism becomes eclectic. It is a selection from many different sources. It adapts itself to every religion and form of worship with which it comes into contact, from the local deities and nature-worship of the hill-tribes to the idea of

mercy found in Buddhism. The Bhagavad-gita, a part of the great epic Mahabharata, contains the loftiest conceptions of later Hinduism. Some go so far as to say that it has the essentials of religion. It may have words similar to our Biblical terms, but they have a different use and meaning. It is fundamentally pantheistic and fatalistic; teaches the absolute effacement of self; and final absorption into the infinite. It has nothing about salvation through divine atonement; of co-operation with God; of knowledge which touches the springs of life; of grief and penitence for sin.

In the Tantras the worship of the female principle is introduced. They run either into mysticism or licentiousness. Their worship cannot with decency be described.

The Tan-
tras.

Taking Hinduism as a whole, and at its best, with its emphasis on the spiritual nature of all existence, it comes short when compared with the Bible.

1. Its conception of God is that of a cold, unconscious being without thought, emotion or moral attribute of worth. He is neither a Father, a Redeemer, nor a

Compared
with the
Bible

Comforter. He is neither Light, Love nor the Father of Spirits. He does not atone.

2. Its conception of the soul is that of a temporary emanation from God, a reflection like the moon's light. It has no capacity for fellowship with its source.

3. Its conception of sin is that of ceremonial defilement, and nothing deeper. There is no deep conception of expiation, no idea of a great sacrifice for sin. There is no remonstrance against sin, no moral instruction or effort to encourage or establish character, no idea of sanctification. The ethics of the book are below that of the people. The gods are immoral, almost without exception.

4. Its conception of a future is fatalistic. The soul goes through 8,400,000 transmigrations, and is finally annihilated or absorbed into deity. It has no resurrection for the body, and no victory over death.

5. In its conception of man it reaches its highest in the "Code of Manu." Here are equitable laws but there is no idea of brotherhood. Caste divides man from man. There is a low place given to

women. The ignorant and the children are overlooked.¹

II. *Of Buddhism.*

Buddhism is powerful in Ceylon, Burmah, Siam, Anam, North Western India, Tibet, Nepal, Tartary, and large parts of China and Japan.

We shall not examine the later developments of Buddhism, which reveal the contact of the religion with other ideas which it absorbed. It shows this contact with the devil-worship of Ceylon and Burmah, the Taouism of China and the Shinto of Japan. The Mahayana, a Buddhistic treatise written in Sanscrit, contains many additions to the Buddhism of Buddha derived from without, for example, personal continuity after death, something akin to divine grace, the presence of the spirit of the Buddhas with men, "the infinite mercy," a supreme Buddha. We shall examine the original Bible of Buddhism, the Tripitaka, written in Ceylon in 88 B. C., and containing the most primitive form of the religion.

¹ This discussion of Hinduism is based chiefly on J. M. Mitchell's *The Hindu Religion*, and F. F. Ellinwood's *Oriental Religions and Christianity*.

Gospel nar-
ratives
not from
Bud-
dhism.

Our task being a comparison of the sacred books of Christianity and Buddhism, we shall not go into a detailed comparison of the narratives concerning Jesus, and the legends of a similar nature, which sprung up at a comparatively late date, concerning Gautama, the founder of Buddhism. These legends affirm that his birth was heralded by angels, and was supernatural; that an aged sage blessed him; that he was taken to the temple for consecration; that a jealous ruler sought to destroy him; that in boyhood he astonished the doctors; that he was baptized, tempted, transfigured and received up into heaven. All that need be said here is that the narratives in the Gospels were not copied from Buddhism. Christianity repelled Neoplatonism, Gnosticism and Manichæism in the early centuries. Why should it have gone out of its way to borrow Buddhism? The attitude of the Jews towards all heathenism makes copying improbable. Moreover, if these narratives had been copied, the clever Celsus and Porphyry would have exposed the fact when they assailed Christianity. Kuenen says that there are no coincidences between these legends and the stories of Jesus. And

Rhys Davids affirms, "I can find no evidence of any actual or direct communication of these ideas common to Buddhism and Christianity from the East to the West." If there was any copying done, it was done by the East.

Buddhism arose in India in the seventh century before Christ, as a protest of the strong personality of Gautama against the Hindu Brahmins (priests), with all their priestcraft, sacrifices and caste-enforcement. "My law is a law of mercy for all," he said. He taught that religion consists not in rites, but in duty; and that duty is kindness to all creatures and things. But Gautama did not stop here; he evolved a philosophy of life and destiny.

A protest
against
Brahmin-
ism.

1. His teachings may be summarized as follows:

(1) Four Great Truths. (a) There is suffering everywhere. (b) The origin of suffering is lust. Lust is connected with consciousness. Consciousness is from Karma. Karma is the moral retribution of the entire action of a man's past. (c) The extinction of suffering is by annihilation of lust. (d) The path to the extinction of suffering is through right views,

"Four
Great
Truths."

desires, speech, conduct, livelihood, effort, mindfulness and rapture.

"Four
Stages."

(2) Four Stages in the Path of Salvation. (a) Conversion, which he looks upon as the getting rid of the illusion of self, or of the "delusion of the permanency and the importance of one's own individuality." (b) Destruction of the doubt that all is lost, when the delusion of the permanence and importance of self are got rid of. (c) Struggle against lust, ill-will towards men, animals and gods, and dullness in receiving impressions from higher things; and a breaking of the bonds of desire for the future life, of pride and self-righteousness, and of ignorance of the "Four Great Truths." (d) Nirvana, the peace of self-effacement.

2. In a comparison of this religious system with the Bible its many demerits appear.

Ethics.

(1) Its ethical teaching is the strong feature of Buddhism. It is a moral religion, yet it has made no special contribution to the moral principles of the world. Its principles are the common heritage of mankind. It is humanitarian, yet it is individualistic to the point of selfishness. Supreme thought and effort must be on

one's own life, it says. There is no hint of the principle of love to others. The moral law which was broken it regards as an impersonal law. It is a religion for the cultured alone.

(2) In its spiritual teachings, so far as it has any, it is a religion of works and self-effort. There is no help from above, or heavenly incentive. There is no Saviour; Gautama saved only himself. The sense of evil is present, but without the conception of pardon, atonement and reconciliation. There is no Comforter. Its highest aim for self is to renounce the highest possibility into which man is capable of developing, and to descend into the passionless calm of vegetative existence. This is not the self-surrender of the Christian, in which self-hood is at its best; it is rather the extinction of self. The peace of Nirvana is not the Christian peace.

Spiritual
teach-
ings.

(3) It has a gloomy view of the world and of human life. It believes the world had no Creator. "A vast cycle of events, and not a will or cause, have produced the universe." The world is a world of sorrow. Misery is the estate of every individual, and there is no escape, life itself

Its world.

being a punishment by Fate for man's past state. The body, it thinks, should be despised and forsaken utterly, because it is a misfortune to have one.

Its future. (4) Gautama's system implies a future of some length, but he himself was reticent, and indeed agnostic on the subject. The future was in the hand of a cold and merciless Fate. Immortal life would be looked upon as a disaster. There is in his teachings no hope for the "house not made with hands," and the "general assembly of the first-born."

No God. (5) Gautama condemns the idea of a personal God as the first cause and immanent reality of all things. He has no God, no Lawgiver, no Father, no one who forgives, and no one to meet us in the dark valley.

The whole religion is a bitter cry and a yearning. It is a groping in the dark; but nothing which has arrived at, or which can produce, confidence.¹

III. *Of Parseeism.*

The Zend-Avesta.

The sacred book of the Parsees is the Zend-Avesta, composed for the most part

¹ This discussion of Buddhism is based chiefly on Reynold's *Buddhism*, Rhys David's *Buddhism and Christianity* and Ellinwood's *Oriental Religions and Christianity*.

between the fourth and seventh centuries before Christ. The crowning merit of this book is its eternal distinction between right and wrong. It has a supreme deity, Ahura Mazda. It has also an eternal evil spirit, Ahriman. These two are forever at war. Ahura Mazda has on his side a celestial group and also inferior heavenly beings,—genii who preside over fire, water, light, air, etc. Ahriman has about him a “grisly council of hell.” The whole creation is arbitrarily divided between the two camps. The stars are on Ahura Mazda’s side. The planets are under Ahriman’s banner. Even the animals take sides. The belief is that evil will be overthrown; and that for the good there is a heaven awaiting, and for the wicked a hell.

The merits of this religion are many, but it has connected with it disfiguring faults. The Bible has all its merits with none of its demerits.

1. Its god hates evil, and possesses no immoral attributes. But he is a weak god. He is not the Creator of all things. Inferior divinities assist him, and he prays to them. There is no peculiar homage paid to him. He is honored only as every good object in the creation is honored. There is

Theism.

a mixture of monotheism, dualism and polytheism. It is defective in its representation of certain attributes of God, such as fatherhood, love and communion. Intellectual shallowness marks its treatment of great problems, if it notices them at all.

Worship.

2. There is no immorality nor cruelty attached to its worship. But it is defective. It is excessive in that the whole of the good creation, both the objects and the genii who preside over them, are worshipped. It is *ritualistic to the extreme*. Each day has five prayer-periods, with different prayers for each period. Each day is sacred to some divinity. Besides, there are many festal days,—new year, equinox, new moon, full moon, etc. It is *formal*. Prayers are little more than magical formulæ or incantations, the sounds and not the sense being all important. It is *individualistic*. There is no common worship. No “Our Father” is said. It is *low* in that offerings are presented to divinities because they need food, and are strengthened by praise. It is also low in that many of its rites are either childish or disgusting.

Ethics.

3. The Zend-Avesta divides human duty into three great parts—good

thoughts, good words and good deeds. It inculcates truthfulness, kindness and charity; assigns a position of respect to women; allows no asceticism; and encourages work. Activity against evil is urged. Robbery, assault, sexual impurity and murder are denounced. But it teaches nothing about self-sacrifice and self-denial. There is laxity in its pronouncement on marriage, encouraging the union of those near of kin. It has no great example of holiness.

4. It is defective in its conception of **Sin.** sin because it confounds moral and ceremonial impurity. It has no idea of *iniquity*, hence no idea of self-reproach, penitence, atonement, expiation, purification and rapture of pardon. Ceremonial cleansing is the only kind it knows. There is unexpected estimates of the heinousness of sins. For example, murder is less heinous than carrying a dead body. Punishments are disproportionate to offences. Man-slaughter is punished with ninety stripes; giving bad food to a dog with two hundred. Some extraordinary sins it considers unpardonable.¹

¹ This discussion of Parseeism is based chiefly on Mitchell's *The Zend-Avesta*.

IV. *Of Confucianism.*

Sacred
books.

The teachings of Confucius may be gathered from The Analects, Great Learning and The Doctrine of the Mean. These teachings were gathered up and published as a sacred edict by the second emperor of the present dynasty in 1670. In 1724 an amplification of this edict was published. Still later an exposition of the amplification was issued.

More than
a moral
system.

On the surface, Confucianism is a merely moral system; but examined more closely, it has the marks of a religion. It emphasizes what it regards as the five regular constituents of our moral nature, viz., the principles, attributes and faculties of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sincerity. The Chinese Primer speaks of these in this manner, "Affection between father and son; concord between husband and wife; kindness on the part of the elder brother and deference on the part of the younger; order between seniors and juniors; sincerity between friends and associates." These duties and relations are regarded by Confucius as the appointment of "Heaven," and hence their fulfilment is a religious act. It is in this indirect way that the element of worship appears.

Confucius shrank from discussing questions about the existence and operations of God in a direct way. The only direct worship permitted was that of the sovereign, who, at the most, on two or three occasions each year worshipped the Supreme as the representative of the people. There is no incitement to love God.

Under two heads the books of Confucianism can fairly be contrasted with the Bible.

1. There is much to admire in their **Morality.** practical teachings. Confucius is to be praised for his promotion of morality. There is beauty in the devotion of children to parents which he inculcates; but the Bible in addition, teaches the duty of parents to children. Confucius states the Golden Rule, but negatively; and the motive which he advances is that of justice and not of love. The Bible's ultimate motive for conduct is the glory of God. The Bible gives a high place to women; Confucius permits concubinage. Confucius gives no example of holiness. He himself confesses many breaches of the moral law. He has an ideal for man, but offers no power by which to attain it.

2. Their religion is defective in that it **Religion.** does not permit of direct access to God.

It does not teach the nearness of God, nor the fact of divine help. There is no glow of piety and devotion in it. Reverence for the past is its central element. The ideal of character aimed at is short of perfection. These books are without a profound sense of sin. They have no world vision of regeneration. They have no God suffering for, redeeming the world, triumphing over sin and death, and reigning forever.¹

V. *Of Mohammedanism.*

The
Koran.

There are many excellencies in the Koran. It teaches the existence of one God and is opposed to idolatry. It believes in the control of all things by Providence. Prayer is enjoined, temperance urged, tithing encouraged, and intoxication and chance forbidden. It professes to acknowledge previous revelations in Judaism and Christianity. It is grounded for the most part on the Old and New Testaments, and has borrowed from them, all that is best in it.

The radical evils of the Koran's teach-

¹ This discussion of Confucianism is based chiefly on Legge's *Christianity and Confucianism Compared*.

ings are many, but they may be summed up as follows:

1. The divorce of wives at pleasure is sanctioned. Polygamy and concubinage are permitted, four wives at a time and any number of slave girls being allowed. Woman is depressed to an inferior position in all her social relations, and deprived of most of her rights. Relation of
the sexes.

2. Prayer must be offered at five stated times a day with the accompanying ceremony of washing. Certain forms and passages are to be repeated with prescribed prostrations and knee-bendings. This is obligatory in whatever state of mind the so-called worshipper may be. The whole is formal. Worship consists also in fasting. There is a month of severe fasting each year. Another obligation resting on the faithful, is the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca and Mount Arafât; and this he is asked to make, it matters not in what part of the earth he may reside. This worship in all its parts is to be pushed with the sword. Worship.

3. Freedom of thought and private judgment are denied. The Koran has no conception of the fatherhood of God, grace, salvation from above and by atonement, Personal
religion.

nor adoption. Its god is a god of fate. He is the author of evil. All things are absolutely determined and there is no escape. It holds out the hope of a heaven for those whom Fate decrees shall inherit it; but it is a demoralizing heaven. It inspires the spirit of martyrdom by giving a vision of a "heaven opened and black-eyed maidens all bridally attired clasping thee in their fond embrace." It nowhere teaches self-denial. It has rules instead of principles.¹

"The religion of Christ contains whole fields of morality and whole realms of thought which are but outside the religion of Mohammed. It opens humility, purity of heart, forgiveness of injuries, sacrifice of self, to man's moral nature; it gives scope for toleration, development, boundless progress to his mind; its motive power is stronger even as a friend is better than a king, and love higher than obedience." ²

VI. *Summary.*

The sym-
pathetic
view.

From this brief survey of the great religions, one may be led to question, using

¹ This discussion of Mohammedanism is based chiefly on Muir's *The Rise and Decline of Islam* and *Islam and Christianity*, and Ellinwood's *Oriental Religions and Christianity*.

² R. Bosworth Smith in an address before the Fellows of Zion College, Feb. 21, 1888, quoted by Ellinwood, *Oriental Religions and Christianity*, p. 218.

the words of Max Müller, "whether there is or whether there is not, hidden in every one of the sacred books, something that could lift up the human heart from this earth to a higher world, something that could make man feel the omnipresence of a higher power, something that could make him shrink from evil and incline to good, something to sustain him in the short journey through life with its bright moments of happiness, and its long hours of terrible distress."¹ And if one find this "something" it must not blind him to the truth. Quoting the same author again, "What we want here, as everywhere else, is the truth, and the whole truth; and if the whole truth must be told, it is, that however radiant the dawn of religious thought, it is not without its dark clouds, its chilling colds, its noxious vapors."²

The religion of the Bible is superior, in Summary. that it contains all the truths in those religions put all together, with none of their error. In addition it has that which they all missed. It believes in the immanence of God with the Hindu; in the supremacy of peace with the Buddhist; in the eternal

¹ The Sacred Books of the East, vol. I. pp. xxxvii, xxxviii.

² Ibid. p. xi.

distinction between right and wrong with the Parsee; in the virtue of reverence for the past with the Chinese; and in the One Supreme God with the Mohammedan.

The Bible is free from the cold immoral view of the supreme god of the Hindu; the atheism of the Buddhist; the weak deity and the dualism of the Parsee; the unapproachable "Heaven" of Confucius; the fatalistic god of Mohammed. It has nothing of the plurality of gods of nearly all the other religions. Its God is a personal spirit, "infinite, eternal, unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth." He is Father. It has nothing of the idea of transmigration, found in Hinduism and Buddhism, or the idea of a controlling Fate common to Hinduism, Buddhism and Mohammedanism.

The universe of which the Scriptures speak is under personal control. The future is immediate and conscious weal or woe. There is a conception of sin as inner defilement, which Hindu, Buddhist, Parsee, Chinese and Mohammedan have not. Here are the ideas of grace, divine atonement, merciful help, expiation, self-surrender which is the highest selfhood,

peace which is supreme self-consciousness, and perfection, which none of them has. The hope of a resurrection and a future of blessedness such as none of them has are here. The Bible has Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER III.

DIVERSIFIED UNITY.

HENRY WARD BEECHER once said, "Life loves variety; God loves variety; and men do, when they are alive." The Bible has infinite charm because of its variety. It is without monotony. Like nature, it "speaks a various language."

I. *It is a Library.*

The Bible is not a book in the ordinary sense of the word, but a library. Only since the thirteenth century has the name "Bible" in the singular form been applied to it. Its character as a library was recognized by the early fathers and the theologians of the middle ages. They refer to it as the "Books."¹ It is composed of sixty-six separate books, thirty-nine in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New.

The cream
of a na-
tion's lit-
erature.

A certain interest will be awakened when one considers that these books do not constitute the entire literature of the Jews

¹ See Westcott, *The Bible in the Church*, p. 5, Rice, *Our Sixty-Six Sacred Books*, pp. 8, 9.

and of the Apostolic Church. This is the cream of their literature. There are at least sixteen books quoted in the Old Testament, which are now lost. The titles of some of these are "The Book of Jashar," "The Wars of Jehovah," "The Book of the Words of Solomon," "The Words of Nathan," "The Words of Jehu," "The Words of Gad," "The Visions of Jedo," and "The Prophecy of Ahijah." There are, besides these, many apocryphal books, for which claims have been made for a place with the books held sacred. It is also supposed that Solomon was the author of over a thousand songs, although but one or two are preserved.

The New Testament, too, is but a portion of a quite extensive literature of the age of the apostles. It is known that there existed such writings as "The Gospel of Peter," "The Gospel to the Hebrews," "The Gospel to the Egyptians," "The Preaching of Peter," "The Epistle of Barnabas," "The Teaching of the Apostles," "The 'Shepherd' of Hermas," "The First and Second Epistles of Clement," and "The Apocalypse of Peter."

The books to be held sacred were long a subject of discussion and deliberation.

Deliberately accepted.

The rights of such books as Esther, Ruth, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes and Ezekiel were questioned, although they had a place with the others from an early date. In Ecclesiasticus, which was probably written soon after 300 B. C., the books of the Old Testament are spoken of as a well known aggregate. And that aggregate is the one we have to-day.¹ Certain books in the New Testament were likewise questioned for a time. These were Hebrews, James, II. Peter, II. and III. John, Jude and Revelation. Yet the Old Testament, from the third century B. C. at the latest, and the New Testament, almost from the time of the apostles, have been regarded as a library of specially sacred books.² And they are so regarded because of the respective dictation of both Jewish and Christian reason, conscience and common consciousness, guided by the Holy Spirit.

In three
lan-
guages.

This library of books was written in three languages. Hebrew is the language of the greater portion of the Old Testament. Parts of Ezra (4: 8-6: 18; 7: 12-26,) and Daniel (2: 4-7: 28) were writ-

¹ See W. J. Beecher, *Old Testament Notes* 1902, p. 89.

² See Hasting's *Dictionary of the Bible*, "New Testament."

ten in Aramaic. Chronicles, Nehemiah, Esther, Ecclesiastes, and Jonah have an Aramaic coloring. The New Testament was written in Greek.

Some of the books composing this library were themselves made up of separate books. Sub-
divided. Thus, for instance, the Book of Psalms has in it five collections of sacred poems, some as early or earlier than David, some as late or later than the Exile; and the Book of Proverbs consists of five collections.

II. *It is Comprehensive.*

The sixty-six books have a variety in their form and subject matter.

1. Form.

(1) Fully two thirds is made up of History. *narrative*, and this narrative is full of variety. It is composed of the history of creation, early man, and the deluge; the rise, progress, difficulties and decline of the Jewish nation; the contemporary history of the empire established, enlarged and overthrown; the mutual relations of these empires and Israel; the public affairs, plots, wars and disasters in the countries from Assyria to Egypt; and the history of the founding of the Christian church,

and its progress in the first fifty years. Wonderful history it all is, and history of inestimable value. It is wonderful both because of the events themselves which it narrates, and because of its selection of these events. An apparently trivial incident from an ordinary course of events is described at length, while a hundred generations are passed by in silence. It is valuable, not only because of the worth of the history itself; but because it is based on tradition common to all men at the dawn of history, and preserves records of events transcribed in documents long since lost. The whole is very interesting.

Biography. It is a book of remarkable biography. No other personages that ever lived are so well known to the world as the men and women of the Bible. There exist nowhere such graphic delineations of character and such faithful portraiture of all classes of men. These personages are clothed with flesh and blood. The world is familiar with the great Chaldean nobleman Abraham, the mighty Egyptian general Moses, the faithful Samuel, the loving Ruth, the religious David, the practical Solomon, the daring Elijah, Daniel the Exile, John

the Patmos seer, Paul the missionary and the Man of Galilee.

(2) Here is *law* too. The most basal **Law.** treatment of man's duty to man, to himself, and to God is here commending itself to and commanding conscience. Moses in the laws he gave to Israel, whether he gave them new or merely restated ancient laws, laid down precepts which are fundamental concerning the whole round of duties, individual and social. The prophets emphasize these laws. Jesus gives the spiritual basis of duty. The apostles make practical application of their Master's principles.

(3) There are books of *poetry* and *proverbs* in the library. Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Solomon's Song and Lamentations are poetical. Poetry, proverb and parable are scattered through many of the books. The Creation and Flood stories, the song of Lamech, the blessing of Jacob, the blessing of Moses, the oracles of Balaam, the song at the crossing of the Red Sea, the song of Deborah, David's lament for Saul and Jonathan, and Solomon's words in dedicating the Temple are samples of the Old Testament poetry scattered throughout the non-poetical books. Many passages in the prophetical books are in the

**Poetry,
proverbs
and par-
ables.**

form of poetry. In the New Testament, the "Magnificat" of Mary, the "Benedictus" of Zacharias and the "Nunc Dimittis" of Simeon in Luke are poetical. Proverbs and parables are in abundance everywhere, the latter reaching their full effectiveness in the discourses of our Lord. No collection of books has such stately poetry, uttering the emotions of the universal heart; such crisp condensations of truth, expressing the wisdom of God, and man's experiences; and such beatific imagery, exhausting life and nature for analogies.

Argument
and
oratory.

(4) Some of these books are in the form of *argument* and *oratory*. There are argumentative books like the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians and Hebrews; oratorical books like Isaiah, Amos and Joel. Argument and oratory are scattered through many of the books. "Come, let us reason together," is a principle on which many of the books are written. Paul on Mars' Hill is one of many familiar figures. The unanswerable argument, the impassioned denunciation and the wise admonition of the Scriptures are without parallel.

Threefold
general
division.

2. Subject Matter.

The Old Testament Scriptures from early

days were spoken of as "the Law, the Prophets and the Writings." In the New Testament there is a corresponding three-fold classification into Historical, Doctrinal and Practical, and Prophetical.

In a general way we may say the subject matter is confined to human character, moral instruction and spiritual truth. But in the treatment of these there is diversity.

All imaginable types of men are pictured. All secret motives, hidden tendencies, undiscerned influences, low passions, lofty ambitions, all steps of degradation and all flights of attainment are brought to light. Achan the embezzler, Balaam the prostitutor of talent, Samson the weak giant, Haman the malice bearer, Jonathan the friend, Nehemiah the conservator, Peter the denier and Judas the betrayer are samples of this character-analyzing power. The consummation of character-drawing which it gives is the sublime portrait of the Incarnate Christ,—God in the flesh, the sympathizing Friend, the Great Physician, the Teacher, the crucified King, the perfect Sacrifice, the mighty Victor over death, the Lord of life, and blessed forever.

Human
character
varied.

There is an ever-advancing morality in

Moral
teaching
pro-
gressed.

the Bible. The books are the result of a progressive growth in man's grasp of God. Not that the earlier was untrue; but that it was partial—less full—when compared with the later. The earlier laws were perfect for those generations, but they were temporary. They were not adapted for a more enlightened and complex civilization. "There was a time of ignorance," says Farrar, "which God winked at in the Jewish as well as in the heathen world." Christ brought to perfection the laws stated by Moses for an earlier age.

Spiritual
truth
ad-
vanced.

The development in the presentation of spiritual truth, and the many-sidedness of the appeal adapted to the diversities of human natures, make the Bible an interest-holding Book. To notice but a few features of this variety, we see how the Jehovah—the Ruler, Judge and God of battles—of the Old Testament is the Heavenly Father of the New. The conception of a deliverer of Israel gradually develops. He is first a man, a descendant of Abraham. At the last, he is called by Isaiah "Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." At the first, sacrifice is external,—the sacrifice of beasts. At the last, it becomes a

matter of life,—love and good deeds, “....present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. . . .” (Romans 12:1).

III. *It has many Authors.*

The sixty-six books of the Bible are the product of forty or more men, who lived at widely separated periods. A thousand years and more divide the first of them from the last. Moses lived at the time of the Exodus; David and Solomon at the crowning height of Jewish history; Amos when the Assyrian was knocking at the gates; Ezekiel when by the waters of Babylon they sat and wept; Matthew in the shadow of the Cross. In each writer there is a reflection of the time in which he lived.

From many times.

These books sprang from various soils. The law came from the desert of Sinai; many of the prophecies and “writings” from Judea, in and about Jerusalem; others of the prophecies from Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia; the epistles of the New Testament from Greece, Asia Minor and Rome; and the Revelation of John from the isle of Patmos.

From many soils.

The conditions in which the authors were placed were as diversified as can

From many conditions.

well be imagined. Their rank, prosperity and times were seldom the same or alike. We see Moses in the midst of a horde of fleeing slaves; David in the king's palace; Isaiah in the degenerating civilization of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel; Daniel in the midst of Babylon's idolatry; Ezra in the time of revival; John in the Roman persecution.

Of many
natures
and occu-
pations.

There are back of these books and coming out through them the different natures and occupations of their authors. Coursing through the pages we hear successively the voices of lawgiver, general, seer, king, prophet, poet, psalmist, peasant, chronicler, publican, physician, philosopher and fisherman. At one time it is the voice of entreaty; at another it is the shout of exultation; and next it is the cry of penitence. Now it is the tense note of argument or denunciation; and then again it is the hushed breathings of rest, praise and rev-ery. We have here the mysticism and the profound spiritual experience of David or John; there the dialectics and enthusiasm of Paul; and yonder the practical word of James or Peter. Turn the page and it is Job or Ecclesiastes grappling with the great problems of the world; Jeremiah in

a melancholy mood; or Habakkuk with his conquering faith defying doubt and destiny.

Thus we have the imprint of different minds and natures under unlike conditions, not only upon the same subject, but upon different subjects. Men, severed as far as possible from each other by intellectual culture, temperament and literary style, picture man and present the moral and spiritual themes of the Bible. No wonder the Bible is saved from monotony, and gives truth with so remarkable a balance and so cumulative an effect.

IV. *It is for All Men.*

The Bible, being so comprehensive in its statement of what moral and spiritual states are approved by God in every imaginable circumstance in which every sort of person imaginable could be placed, is therefore a book of inestimable value to men and women in every nation, time, clime, and condition. It gives expert guidance for all. It is the universal key to conduct.

The Book appeals to people in every mood, and not to the intellectual mind alone, neither to the imaginative or the

In every
mood.

poetical alone. Its appeal is to these. It is also and equally to the sympathetic, the emotional and the practical. It is suitable for the cheerful; it is equally adapted for the downcast.

In every
circum-
stance.

The appeal reaches people of every age and in every condition. It is equally attractive to the child, the youth, the mature and the aged. It is for the strong and the weak, hale and sick, traveler and home man, the man on the calm wave or the one on the boisterous billow. The mother in the Arctic hut or beneath the Southern Cross lulls her babe to sleep with its lyrics. The sailor leaning over the rail in the Indian Ocean, and the soldier on the Transvaal battlefield, read it at night by the light of moon or campfire. The owner of the palace and the red man in his wigwam alike adore its depths. The man beginning his career and the worn-out patriarch on his death-bed equally prize its blessed page. There are the finger-posts pointing to the wells of comfort and consolation, the green pastures and still waters, the cities of refuge and the shadow of the Rock.

Because of
its truth-
fulness.

This is so because of its truthfulness. It bears on its face evidence to its own truthfulness. There is no dilettanteism

about it. It uses plain speech, straightforward narration of facts, with utter indifference to fastidiousness about words. It is honest in every particular. It calls a fig a fig and a spade a spade. It is truthful in its biography. It describes men as they really were. Even the worthies it does not hide in their iniquity. Noah's drunkenness, Abraham's deceitfulness, Lot's worldliness, Jacob's fraud, Moses' hot-headedness, David's adultery, Elijah's timidity, Peter's disloyalty, are not white-washed. There is no unreality in any part of the Scriptures. Men's own experience testifies to its truthfulness. It is bold and confident in all its statements, and thus invites the inquiry and challenges the criticism of men. These bold statements at one time standing alone caused men to hesitate, especially when the statements seemed to be contradicted by secular history. But now the Bible is being vindicated by the monuments,—by the Moabite stone discovered in 1868, the El-Amarna tablets discovered in 1887, and by recent discoveries in Egypt and Babylonia—and educated men have the growing conviction that there is a good warrant for its boldness and confidence in all its assertions.

Its truthfulness, self-evident, experienced and proven, causes them to come and listen.

V. *It is One Book.*

With all its diversity the Bible does not hang loosely together. The library is one Book.

One nation
behind
it.

It has the unity which arises from the one nationality back of it and the chief history which it narrates. From Genesis to Revelation it first of all depicts God's dealings with Israel, both as a nation and as individuals. Israel's several privileges, several falls, several punishments and several restorations make up the body of the Book.

Emphasis
on great
themes
consis-
tent.

There is from first to last a fixed separation of good from evil. Even though the early teaching may not be so full as the later there is no contradiction between them. Good and evil are always held apart. The good is ever esteemed highly and effort made to perpetuate it. Evil is ever rebuked and punished. Noah is rescued from a wicked world, Abraham called to start a separate nation, Esau separated from Jacob, Jacob's descendants brought out of Egypt, Saul rejected for David,

kings' and peoples' sins rebuked by prophets, Israel punished by captivity and again roused to do the right by her leaders and prophets. John the Baptist preached righteousness. Christ and his apostles marked the cleavage clearer than ever.

All through the Book the idea is impressed that God proposes to restore sinful man by grace through One to be sent. The first promise of this was given to Adam and Eve in God's address to the serpent: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." The promise was repeated successively, and in ever clearer terms, to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David. The prophets, centuries before the Saviour's advent, foretold his coming. The whole Bible may be summed up in three sentences,—“He is coming; He has come; He will come again.” The one spiritual teaching, which has been called the “Epic of Redemption,” is the burden of the Book. It was their bearing upon this teaching that determined the selection of the books which compose the “Divine Library.”

There is a consistency in the various

books in all the spiritual truths they impart. God is always holy; man, sinful; the future of God's kingdom, triumphant and glorious. The teaching concerning regeneration and all other subjects whether it be given by Moses, David, Hosea or Paul, is essentially the same.¹

Books are
parts of
a whole.

The different books are complements of a larger whole. The individual books, though in a sense complete in themselves, are yet but treatments of separate aspects of a larger subject. To get a complete statement of the subject of conduct, a perfect view of human character, a thorough understanding of the new life, one needs, not one book, but the whole Bible. It is one book in that it contains all the facts, doctrines and persuasives needed for men's improvement. Every part has its peculiar worth, and contributes its share to the perfection of the whole. As the continents, islands, lakes, seas, rivers, valleys and mountains are parts of one earth, so law, prophecy, poetry, ethics, and revelation are parts of one book. The speech of the patriarchs, the legislation of Moses, the song of the psalmists, the announcements

¹ See on the unity of the Bible, Sir W. P. Wood, *The Continuity of Scripture*, for a fuller development of the argument.

of the prophets, the gospel of Christ, the teachings of Paul and the apocalypse of John are organically one. The Bible is an orchestra: it has many parts but one grand volume of harmonious music.

CHAPTER IV.

CHOICEST LITERATURE.

Inspira-
tion.

THE Bible is a peculiarly inspired book, yet it is thoroughly human. The inspiration was of a kind that did not obscure the personal traits of the writers. The life has a basis in clay as well as in the breath of God. The writers were not hampered in the least in their use of all legitimate human devices to make the message attractive. The literary attractiveness, instead of proving God's absence, is rather an indication of his presence in both the form and spirit of the book.

Human
element
often hid
by men.

In days now departing the human element was minimized by many. This was due in part to the way in which the book was printed. There was no regard to the form, whether prose or poetry, in which it was originally written. No distinction was made between history or drama. No effort was made to show the structure of discourse or epistle. The whole was

printed in a dreary monotony of chapters and verses, separated not on the natural lines of cleavage, but capriciously.

The manner in which many men read the Word in public worship hid its human side. All naturalness was taken out of the vocalization of the words, and a certain *tone* given to them which aimed to convey mysteriously to the audience the idea that they were hearing not man's word but God's. There is no doubt that the spirit of reverence was behind this manner of reading, and it inspired reverence in many; but it is no less true that it did not attract the world to the Book. Neither did it help Christians to see its beauty as literature.

The method of preaching sermons from texts, useful in a hundred ways, failed to show, and perhaps hindered the vision of, the literary character of the Scriptures.

The aim of God in using the Bible was to reach the ungodly and to develop the God-fearing. The latter might survive, but would not thrive vigorously, on a few plain, unadorned chapters on morals and theology; a few paragraphs on the facts of the incarnation and the atonement, the duties of the present, the thoughts

God's aim,
and a
human
book.

which comfort, support and guide. But God in his wisdom adapted the Word to the character of the men whom he had created. He suited it, as he did nature, for taste. He made it to catch the heart which was made to love the attractive.

I. *The Elements of Great Literature in the Bible.*

Figures of
speech.

1. The figurative language attracts. Unknown ideas are difficult to comprehend, and hence are unattractive to many in their bald setting forth. These ideas, explained in terms of the known, instantly become attractive. The Bible makes spiritual truths clear and charming by means of references to known facts. Nature, common life, political and religious institutions and history are exhausted in making clear the character of God, the spiritual life, the future, etc. In giving the many-sidedness of the nature of God, he is called Lawgiver, King, Shepherd, Father, etc. Jesus Christ is spoken of as Son, Brother, Vine, Bread of Life, etc. Heaven is referred to as a house of many mansions, a city, etc. The care of God finds illustration in the mountains round about Jerusalem; the thirst for righteousness, in the

hart that panteth for water brooks. Evil is called "tares." The end of the world is a "harvest." The ceremonies and institutions of the Hebrews are used to illustrate the truths of the Gospel dispensation. The Epistle to the Hebrews contains striking examples of this use. References are made in the New Testament frequently to the history of Israel, in the way of illustrating or pointing a truth. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life" (John 3:14, 15); "For they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ" (I. Cor. 10:4).¹

Not only do the figurative details make the truths attractive, but they themselves are essentially attractive. The picture of nature illustrating the might of God, which is given in Psalm 29, is vivid and grand. One can see the storm, marching up from the Mediterranean, through the mountains of Lebanon, and into the wilderness of Kadesh. The portrayal of the love of God in Luke 15, is full of beauty in the touches

¹ See E. Robie, "Figurative Language of the Scripture," *Bib. Sac.* vol. 13. p. 314.

of human life which it gives. In all the natural descriptions and the relation of simple incidents there is perfection. God's knowledge of and power over nature as depicted in Job 38 to 41 has no parallel. There is a charm in the glimpses of common life we get in all the narrative. A good example is found in Gen. 24.

Great
themes.

2. The Bible occupies the topmost place in literature by virtue of the themes which it presents for human consideration. About all of its discussions there are a majesty and a magnificence more than kingly. No other book has such weighty subjects, as may be seen from a mention of some of them. A Power Underlying All and Guiding All. The Purpose of the World. Perfect Human Life. A Perfect Social World. Service. World Federation. A Life Beyond. The Evolution of Choice. The Vastness of Small Things. The grandeur is due to a combination of theme, vision and earnestness.

Great
spirit.

3. There is the spirit of the greatest literature in the Scriptures, without any detracting exceptions. They appeal to the best instincts, and draw them out into richer fulness, because they are an expression of the best spirit. There is every-

where from first to last a *seriousness of purpose*. It never bends to the foolish or absurd. Its aim at making men holy is never lost sight of in its history, poetry, prophecy, gospel and epistle. There is running everywhere a *consciousness of the unseen*. "Holy, Holy, Holy" ever rings in the ear while we read; God is ever near; the invisible is about us. We are ever at the portal of the mysterious. Nature it shows to us as vocal with God. And all this is not made repellent, but presented in a way that wins men's attention, and leads them to consider. There is a *purity* which is perfect. There is reference to the vices of men, but never in a way to make them attractive. The description of them never hurts the purest character or takes from the defenses of the weakest. There are no "siren songs of sensuality." If vice must be mentioned, unnecessary details are omitted, and the reader is always made to feel the awful and hideous nature of sin. It touches men with its *pathos*. It is not dead to sentiment. The side of character is revealed which brings tears of joy in the seeing; tears of pride in humanity; tears of gratitude for noble nature; tears of generosity and patriotism. Nothing

finer anywhere can be found than the description of the death of Jacob, the affecting narrative of David and Absalom, the pertinacity and yet the submissiveness of the woman of Shunem praying for her son, the plaintive cry of the exile by Babel's waters, and the "Forgive them" of Calvary. Though it is full of seriousness, sacredness, sobriety and sympathy it is also filled with *joy*. There is in it the ring of victory, not defeat; the breath of life, not death; the whisper of hope, not despair; and confident assurance, not doubt. The joyful odes of Mary and Zacharias, the song of the angels, and the sublime strain of the Baptist from the wilderness, are but echoes in the New Testament from the long silent harps of the ancient prophets.

4. The style of the literature, both of the Old and New Testaments, places the Book at the head of all books. Its style is, in fact, a test of all style.

Clearness.

(1) Noticing, of course, the fact that there are ideas which cannot be perfectly clear but to those who are spiritually minded; that the Bible, as did Jesus, speaks in parables to those who are unprepared to hear; one nevertheless cannot fail to observe that, taken generally, there is

simplicity of speech and directness. Even the parable is, in its outward shell, clear. Where can anything for simplicity of expression surpass the narratives of Genesis or the Gospels?

(2) It bears the mark of fact. The sphere about which assertions are made is that of the inner, eternal, universal and unchangeable. All else is incidental. These assertions the Bible makes with a voice of authority so amazingly confident that it does not usually trouble to apologize, argue or prove. The truth in many of the assertions is self-evidencing, and cannot be denied by anyone. All other statements in regard to matters of the religious life which can be tried, have been tested and found worthy of reliance. Consequently when it speaks about the higher realities men take its word as final, believing it can be trusted here as it can be on the subjects of man's experiences, loves, longings, hopes, problems and battles.

Truthfulness.

(3) The word of God is wide and deep. There is milk for the immature and meat for the full-grown in it. It charms the child, and at the same time engages the thinker in its treatment of the vast problems of the universe. There is no book

Comprehensive-ness.

which so analyzes men's being. The deepest emotions, motives and moods are laid bare. The will in all its intricate relations is examined. The simplicity of statement is not because of any superficiality of idea. Not only is there a profound insight and richness of conception in the Bible, there is also a range and amplitude of sympathy and knowledge which make it at once the book of all men. Jeremiah is pensive; Hosea, loving; John, penetrative; James, practical; Peter, sanguine; and Paul, heroic. It knows the simple and the grand, city and country, land and sea, valley and mountain, the specific and the general, the seen and the unseen, the temporal and the eternal, Dives and Lazarus.

Dignity.

(4) There is an exquisite reserve everywhere. The details of sin are not dwelt upon. Writers speak about themselves with modesty. The anticipation of great things is stated calmly. The commands are not overdone. The tenderness, the sympathy and the love are intimate, yet do not step beyond the bounds of propriety. There is a solemnity and sublimity in the air of the whole Bible which do not permit of descent from a height which recognizes at the same time the dignity of

the Lord and the dignity of man. The style is what Matthew Arnold called "grand." There is an unforced and unstudied majesty in every line.

(5) A glowing earnestness pervades **Fire.** every portion of the Scriptures. Even the prose lights up under the faith, which cannot be subdued, of the writers, and the line between prose and poetry is lost. There was a rapid vibration of the holy men's hearts, which gave a white-hot torrent of words, vehement, sparkling, sin-revealing, heart-searching, and heaven-lighting. And this was so, no matter if it was in reciting patriarchal narratives or portraying the loyalty of David's mighty men, the faith of Habakkuk, or the vision of the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.¹

II. *The Forms of Great Literature in the Bible.*

In addition to the foregoing attractive elements of great literature, the Bible has the charm of being written in all the leading forms of great literature, and these at their best. The great essentials

¹ See J. E. McFadyen, *Bib. World* vol. 16, pp. 438 ff.

are found in all the great forms. This, of course, is not to say that every verse or chapter belongs to one of the great forms of literature. We must remember that we have here, besides formal and elaborate creations, briefs of addresses, reporters' notes, and editors' compilations. But even these are generally presented in a most fascinating manner.

Unique
features.

Before mentioning the varieties of form, it may be well to notice certain unique features of Bible prose and poetry.

The versification is not the measured blank verse of Milton, the smoothly flowing lines of Pope, nor the dancing rhymes of Burns. These do not of themselves constitute poetry. Poetry is not so much in the outer garb as in the inner glow. The inner ideas are generally expressed by poets in harmonious outer garbs of sound and measure, but not by Hebrew poets. Their harmony is of a higher order. It is the harmony of thought produced by *paralleling* whole propositions. The leading thought is expressed, usually, in couplets, the first of which contains the main sentiment, the second repeats, amplifies or balances it. Illustrations may be found by opening the book of Psalms anywhere.

The following quotations will bring the parallelisms out clearly.

“The earth is Jehovah’s, and the fulness thereof ;
The world, and they that dwell therein.
For he hath founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the floods.” (Ps. 24:1, 2.)

“For in the day of trouble he will keep me secretly
in his pavilion :
In the covert of his tabernacle will he hide me.”
(Ps. 27: 5.)

The *sevenfold*, *fivefold* and *threefold* structures are prominent in Hebrew writings. Solomon’s Song, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, and Nahum are sevenfold. Isaiah has seven divisions, the seventh has seven visions, and the first vision is sevenfold. Jeremiah has examples of the sevenfold structure. The three divisions of Amos are each sevenfold. In the New Testament, Matthew presents the Sermon on the Mount in seven sections. The Revelation of John has a prologue of seven addresses, and the body of the book is an unfolding of seven visions, each of which falls into seven subdivisions. The “Wisdom” books,—Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Lamentations—have the fivefold structure. Putting the Old and New Testaments side by side, there is a

corresponding general threefold division. There is a division of the Old into History, Wisdom and Prophetical books. In the New we have a similar arrangement in History (the four Gospels and Acts), Wisdom (the Epistles), and Prophecy (the Revelation of John).

1. Drama.

Job.

In the great literatures outside the Bible, Sophocles, Euripides and Shakespeare are the most distinguished dramatists. The Bible is replete with dramatic incidents and situations. It has drama on a small scale in some minor poems. Job surpasses anything which the Greek or English dramatists ever produced. It is constructed on a majestic scale. Opening in heaven, with the sons of God presenting themselves before Jehovah, and Satan among them, the scene changes to earth, with an ash-heap for stage; a panorama of universal nature for scenery—Orion and the Pleiades sailing by, a rising storm, flashing lightning, rolling thunder and an arching rainbow; for characters, Satan, a group of men, and God; for theme, the mystery of human suffering; for dramatic movement, patience to anger, anger to supplication, supplication to penitence and

trust; for outcome, the vindication of Job by the intervention of Deity; for moral teaching, to “assert eternal Providence and justify the ways of God to men.”

2. Lyric.

The Greeks had Anacreon and Sappho; the Romans, Horace; and the Anglo-Saxons, Shelley, Moore and Burns. These gave us secular lyric poetry at its highest. In the Old Testament all forms of lyric poetry are found. There are *ballads* like the Song of Moses and Miriam (Exod. 15), *monodies* like Psalms 32, 51, *meditations* like Psalm 119. All of these are of a high poetic order, many of them reaching a sublime elevation. But the lyric poetry of the Bible reaches its zenith, and outstrips all the lyrics of the world in its *sonnets, odes, songs, idyls, anthems* and *elegies*. The whole world cannot produce the equal of the “Sonnet on Old Age,” on that subject.

“Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth :

Or ever the evil days come,

And the years draw nigh,

When thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them :

Or ever the sun,
And the light,
And the moon,
And the stars,
Be darkened,
And the clouds return after the rain:
In the day when the keeper of the house shall
tremble,
And the strong men shall bow themselves,
And the grinders cease because they are few,
And those that look out of the windows be
darkened,
And the door shall be shut in the street;

When the sound of the grinding is low,
And one shall rise up at the voice of a bird,
And all the daughters of music shall be brought
low;

Yea, they shall be afraid of that which is high,
And terrors shall be in the way;
And the almond tree shall blossom,
And the grasshopper shall be a burden,
And the caperberry shall burst :

Because man goeth to his long home,
And the mourners go about the streets :

Or ever the silver cord be loosed,
Or the golden bowl be broken,
Or the pitcher be broken at the fountain,
Or the wheel broken at the cistern:

And the dust return to the earth,
As it was;
And the spirit return unto God,
Who gave it."¹ (Eccl. 12: 1-7.)

¹ See R. G. Moulton's *Modern Readers' Bible*.

Human mind cannot excel the "Ode on Divine Providence" (Psalms 103 and 104). Campbell's "Hohenlinden," Burns' "Scots Wha Hae," Scott's "Flodden Field," or any battle scene in Homer cannot equal the "War-song of Deborah" (Judg. 5). Its condensations are marvelous. The tramp of Canaanitish cavalry, the din of spears and shields are audible; the battle array and participating nature are visible as we listen to the song. Nothing in secular poetry equals in sustained loftiness of expression and grandeur of conception, "The Reign of the Righteous King."

"Give the king thy judgments, O God,
And thy righteousness unto the king's son.
He will judge thy people with righteousness,
And thy poor with justice.
The mountains shall bring peace to the people,
And the hills, in righteousness.
He will judge the poor of the people,
He will save the children of the needy,
And will break in pieces the oppressor.
They shall fear thee while the sun endureth,
And so long as the moon, throughout all generations.
He will come down like rain upon the mown
grass,
As showers that water the earth.
In his days shall the righteous flourish,
And abundance of peace, till the moon be no
more.

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea,
And from the River unto the ends of the earth.
They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him;
And his enemies shall lick the dust.
The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall render tribute:
The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.
Yea, all kings shall fall down before him;
All nations shall serve him.
For he will deliver the needy when he crieth,
And the poor, that hath no helper.
He will have pity on the poor and needy,
And the souls of the needy he will save.
He will redeem their soul from oppression and violence ;
And precious will their blood be in his sight:
And they shall live; and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba:
And men shall pray for him continually ;
They shall bless him all the day long.
There shall be abundance of grain in the earth upon the top of the mountains ;
The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon :
And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.
His name shall endure for ever ;
His name shall be continued as long as the sun :
And men shall be blessed in him ;
All nations shall call him happy.
Blessed be Jehovah God, the God of Israel,
Who only doeth wondrous things :
And blessed be his glorious name for ever ;
And let the whole earth be filled with his glory.
Amen, and Amen." (Ps. 72.)

“Neither Theocritus nor Virgil, the traditional masters of the Idyl have given

anything that in dramatic elaborateness approaches Solomon's Song." The praise, joy and bounding gladness of the world reach their earthly climax in the last five Psalms. The plaintiveness of the ages finds best expression in such elegies as Psalm 74, David's "Lament over Saul and Jonathan" (2 Sam. 1:19-27), and the "Captives by Babel's Waters" (Ps. 137).

The riches of the Bible in this field of literature we cannot exhaust. Where let me ask again is such simple beauty, music and power of diction, such tenderness of feeling, such grandeur of imagery, such sublimity of conception, such devoutness of spirit, such morality of tone, such depth of experience, or such impelling power? What is the "Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni" of Coleridge compared with Habakkuk's anthem to Jehovah's glory? *

"O Jehovah, I have heard the report of thee, and
am afraid :

O Jehovah, revive thy work in the midst of the
years ;

In the midst of the years make it known ;

In wrath remember mercy.

* In addition to lyrics noticed see Job 3, 14, 23, 26 and 33-41, and such Psalms as 8, 18, 19, 46, 65, and 68.

God came from Teman,
And the Holy One from mount Paran.
His glory covered the heavens,
And the earth was full of his praise.
And his brightness was as the light ;
He had rays coming forth from his hand ;
And there was the hiding of his power.
Before him went the pestilence,
And fiery bolts went forth at his feet.
He stood, and measured the earth ;
He beheld, and drove asunder the nations ;
And the eternal mountains were scattered ;
The everlasting hills did bow ;
His goings were as of old.
I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction ;
The curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.
Was Jehovah displeased with the rivers ?
Was thine anger against the rivers,
Or thy wrath against the sea,
That thou didst ride upon thy horses,
Upon thy chariots of salvation ?
Thy bow was made quite bare ;
The oaths to the tribes were a sure word.
Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers.
The mountains saw thee, and were afraid ;
The tempest of waters passed by ;
The deep uttered its voice,
And lifted up its hands on high.
The sun and moon stood still in their habitation,
At the light of thine arrows as they went,
At the shining of thy glittering spear.
Thou didst march through the land in indigna-
tion ;
Thou didst thresh the nations in anger.
Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy
people.
For the salvation of thine anointed ;

Thou woundedst the head out of the house of the
wicked man,
Laying bare the foundation even unto the neck.
Thou didst pierce with his own staves the head of
his warriors :
They came as a whirlwind to scatter me ;
Their rejoicing was as to devour the poor
secretly.
Thou didst tread the sea with thy horses,
The heap of mighty waters." (Hab. 3.)

3. Philosophy.

The wisdom of the centuries is given to the world in the Scriptures, and that wisdom the human mind had not thought out elsewhere. It gives us accurately the truth concerning the being, the nature and the mutual relations of the *three great objects* of human thought, namely, the universe, man and God. Scattered through the book are *maxims*, *epigrams* and *proverbs* which are crystallizations of human knowledge and experience. In Proverbs there are collections of these on various themes, such as "Intoxication," "Evil company" and "Laziness." The Epistles of Paul, especially those to the Romans and the Galatians, give us the product of human thought at its strongest. In John's epistle we have incomparable *essays* on "Love," "Holiness," etc. In James there are classics on "Faith and Works,"

No system,
yet all
truth.

“Speech,” “The Origin of Good and Evil,” “Wisdom,” etc. In the Sermon on the Mount all the great essential principles of virtue are found. The great *problems* of Sin and Virtue are worked out by Job, the Psalmist (Psalms 37, 73), and Ecclesiastes. Genesis gives the *origin of things*. The didactic portions portray with unequalled touch the heart of man, and the nature and works of God. The “Night Thoughts” of Young, the “Task” of Cowper, and Thomson’s “Seasons” do not approach in realism and instructiveness the works of Job, Isaiah or Ezekiel.

4. Epic.

The “Iliad” of Homer, the “Æneid” of Virgil, the “Jerusalem Delivered” of Tasso, the “Divina Commedia” of Dante and the “Paradise Lost” of Milton are the great epics of secular literature.

Idealized
fact, and
the
source of
epics.

There is no verse epic in the Bible like these. But it has some as strong, complete and intense. It has none as long as these, but great length is not a necessary essential. Its epics are not purely imaginative, but are idealized fact. It describes vividly and narrates impressively the noble achievements of real characters.

Joseph (Gen. 37-50), Gideon (Judges 6-8), Samson (Judges 13-16), Ruth, Saul (I. Sam. 9-31), Elijah (I. Kings, 17; II. Kings 2) and Jonah are epics as truly as any of the creative works above mentioned.

Besides this the Old and New Testaments are the sources of the elements, facts, sentiments, characters, illustrations, and the moral and religious conceptions, which have entered into the framework of the great modern epics.

5. Prophecy.

Prophetic literature is confined almost entirely to the Bible. It has many forms. It may be either a bold proclamation of God's will as in Hosea 4, a hopeful prediction as in Zechariah 14, a wail of doom as in Jeremiah 50, 51, a shout of triumph, as in Isaiah 47, or a revelation of the future as in Revelation 21.

This prophetic literature is everywhere on a high plane, worthy of the voice of Jehovah speaking from heaven to the sons of men. It reaches its highest in the rhapsodic sweep and the exultant song, in which the hope in a golden age and the triumph of God's justice in the defeat of his enemies are proclaimed. The Rhapsody

of the Chaldeans in Habakkuk (Hab. 2), the proclamation of the Day of the Lord in Joel (Joel 3), Isaiah's Zion Redeemed (Isa. 40-66), Ezekiel's Jerusalem under Judgment (Ezek. 8-11), and Jerusalem in Her Glory (Ezek. 40-48) are worthy examples. Here and there, in places not a few, prophecy reaches grand climaxes beyond the power of words to describe adequately. We are forced to be silent and adore.

“ Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: they all gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be carried in the arms. Then thou shalt see and be radiant, and thy heart shall thrill and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be turned unto thee, the wealth of the nations shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praises of Jehovah. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee; they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar; and I will glorify the house of my glory. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, for the name of Jehovah thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.” (Isa. 60:4-9.)

“ And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month : and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no curse any more : and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein : and his servants shall serve him ; and they shall see his face ; and his name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be night no more ; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun ; for the Lord God shall give them light : and they shall reign for ever and ever.” (Rev. 22:1-5.)

6. History.

There is a network of history in the Book. The doctrines are built on ribs and backbone of fact. The theories were lived out by men and women. There has been an effort in certain quarters, in days now happily passing, to minimize the accuracy of Biblical history. A different attitude prevails since the monuments are coming forth to substantiate so wonderfully the statements of the sacred narratives.

This history makes a most important contribution to the world's knowledge. It has an account of the laws of a remarkable nation, which serves as the basis for the laws of all civilized nations. The biographical matter which is here has, and has

Valuable
records
pre-
served.

had, a most salutary effect on men. Here is the history of that race of people which has been the teacher of the nations in matters of the spirit, and here is the history of the most important institution of the world, the Christian Church. Without it little would be known concerning the antecedents, Founder and early days of this most influential and beneficent helper of mankind.

7. Oratory.

Contains
essential
elements
of ora-
tory.

Daniel Webster once said that to have true eloquence there were needed "the man, the subject, and the occasion." In the man the chief essentials of oratory are intellectual power, vivid imagination, energetic will, intense convictions and refined taste. The subject must be of immense significance and importance. The occasion must be critical. When a Demosthenes discusses the liberty of Greece, on the occasion of a threatened invasion of Philip of Macedon, the world hears an oration.

The men of the Bible are in no wise inferior in gifts to the orators of Europe and America. They have talents, just as good, with an added glow of great religious fervor. Their themes are the highest, deepest, broadest and weightiest that mind

can turn over. Their critical occasions are as dramatic as any in history. When Moses, after a leadership of forty years, and about to take leave of earth without entering the Land of Promise, addresses his people as to their duty, Israel hears a pathetic farewell that reaches the sublime heights of oratory. The dedication of Solomon's temple was one of the milestones in Jewish history. The ceremony was august and glorious. The Hebrew monarch was before the altar of Jehovah. In that prayer of praise and supplication the assembled hosts listened to words, than which none in human speech are more magnificent. Paul stood in the court of Areopagus where once sounded in stentorian tones the voice of Demosthenes. In his full view are the glories of Grecian architecture and sculpture. Before him he can see the temples of the gods. Within the reach of his words are those who have come to hear, on its first promulgation on European soil, the gospel which he knows will silence their oracles. The address on Mars' Hill will, because of its passing excellent presentation of the primal truths of nature and the fundamentals of Christianity, in such majestic,

dignified, felicitous, and courageous sentences, ever stand as one of the supreme and immortal achievements of man. Jesus,—who can rightly characterize his discourses? He is alone and unapproachable. Whether it be in his Sermon on the Mount, his denunciations, or his last address, there is power, truth, pathos, earnestness and sublimity never before reached, and never to be reached again.

Bible oratory the summit of human accomplishment.

Man is the apex of creation. The words of inspired men are the summit of human accomplishment. Both the other attainments of man and impersonal nature are surpassed by them. The most glorious architecture in the world is found in the structure of literary products. Nobler is the structure of Phillips Brooks' sermons than the architecture of Trinity Church, Boston. The grandest color schemes on canvas or in nature fall short of the word pictures of a genius. Superior the word painting of Talmage to the variegated colors of the Grand Cañon. The strongest action is tame beside the rush of thought. More thrilling are the words of Lincoln than the clang of bayonets on Gettysburg; the torrent of Patrick Henry's emotion than the falling floods of

Niagara. The tallest mountains are low beside the poet's vision. More lifting than Mount Blanc is the immortal hymn of Coleridge. Greater than Brooks and Talmage; greater than Lincoln and Henry; and greater than Samuel Taylor Coleridge are the architects, painters, inspirers and guides of Scripture, and by so much more are they entrancing.

CHAPTER V.

TREASURES FOR THE INTELLECT.

All truth
for the
intellect.

THE intellect can admit "revealed" knowledge. There is no schism between intelligence and spiritual faith. They both are based on a participation in the Divine intelligence. "There is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8). The great moral and spiritual truths themselves, as well as the evidence for them, are grasped by the intellect. But in this chapter these revealed truths will be treated, at the most, indirectly. We shall call attention to the truths and facts which, though they may have an influence on the moral and spiritual life, provide both exercise and food for the mind.

Not a
treatise
on
science
or philos-
ophy.

The Bible is not a treatise on science or philosophy. It is not a book for the intellect chiefly. It is first of all a moral and spiritual book. Yet, in presenting its moral and spiritual teachings, it lays a

rational foundation for them. It shows the nature and mutual relations of the finite and infinite. It shows facts concerning God, man and the world incidentally, or as illustrations, in making their nature and relations clear. Hence in no small way is it an intellectual book, but in a profoundly important way. So important a book for the mind is it, that, considered in a comprehensive manner, the claim for a foremost place for it in that line may be well defended. Considering its brevity, and the multiplicity of subjects upon which it touches, and their fundamental character, the thoroughness and universality of its treatment are marvelous.

I. *The World.*

Many would find in the Bible, by ingenious interpretations, observations which they claim show conscious knowledge abreast of modern science, or at least, anticipations of later discoveries. They claim, for example, for the writers, knowledge of the sphericity and rotation of the earth, its suspension in space, the weight of the air, and the possible use of electricity. There are stronger claims

Bible is
popular
and
poetic,
not
scientific.

even than the foregoing made for the accuracy and extent of the Bible's scientific data, but with no more likelihood of acceptance. Earnest attempts, for instance, have been made to show the exact accord of geology with it as to the order of creation given in the first chapter of Genesis. But in these, as in all other attempts to reconcile the statements of Scripture in every detail with the exact affirmations of science, effort is futile. Science, to quote one illustration, flatly denies that the creation of the sun followed chronologically the appearance of vegetation on the earth.

If it were borne in mind, that the Bible uses popular and poetic, and not strictly scientific, language, in speaking of the facts of the world, there would be on the one hand fewer inaccuracies attributed to it, and on the other, fewer remarkable coincidences with science. We would not call the Scriptures unscientific, but non-scientific. The writers referred to the world as it appeared to their senses, just as we, in common conversation, do to-day. It had not entered into the conception of the world of their day, nor for a thousand and more years after, what it was to be

scientific. Their cosmogony was given in a poetic garb. If we examine the Genesis account of creation carefully we shall see that it is poetical, and not intended to be scientific. The poetic element is seen not only in the language and form of sentence, but in the structure of the story. There are two main divisions, the first ending with the thirteenth verse. In each division are three parts. The parts of the second correspond to and balance the parts of the first respectively as follows:

<u>First division.</u>	<u>Second division.</u>
<i>a.</i> Light (vs. 1-5).	Luminaries (14-19).
<i>b.</i> Water and firmament (6-8). .	Water and air animals (20-23).
<i>c.</i> Land (9-13).	Land animals (24-31). ¹

The poetic crowds out the strictly chronological.

Because we have in the Bible the language of casual observation and poetry, is it to be passed by as unworthy of confidence in so far as accurate truth concerning the world is concerned? Assuredly not. We should not go to the Bible it is true for our geology, physics, astronomy, zoology or biology. It does not aim to

Strictly
correct
on cer-
tain
funda-
mentals.

¹ This poetic arrangement was called to my attention by Prof. W. J. Beecher in his classroom.

teach these. All references to these subjects are incidental, and in no wise meant to be scientific, or beyond the dignified popular conception or tradition of the age. There is a teaching, however, concerning the world which is along the line of the purpose of the book and which is strictly accurate. It establishes the relations existing between the world and God. On these fundamental things, which is its province, the Bible is final. The discovery of this, its true character, will make it none the less attractive.

Creation.

1. The world was brought into existence by God. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1); "The pillars of the earth are Jehovah's, and he hath set the world upon them" (1 Sam. 2:8); "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" (Job 38:4); "Our help is in the name of Jehovah, who made heaven and earth" (Ps. 124:8); "Jehovah by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens" (Prov. 3:19); "I am Jehovah, that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth" (Isa. 44:24); "He that built all things is God" (Heb. 3:4). The idea is woven into the heart of Scripture.

The world
is the
glory of
God.

2. The world of things, men and events was made to manifest God. "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Ps. 19:1); "All nations . . . shall come and glorify thy name" (Ps. 86:9); "Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:20); "This sickness is . . . for

the glory of God " (John 11:4); " Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God " (1 Cor. 10:31); " Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him " (John 9:3); " Let the whole earth be filled with his glory " (Ps. 72:19). The world expresses the character and activities of God.

3. All things are sustained by God. " The eyes of Jehovah thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year " (Deut. 11:12); " He increaseth the nations, and he destroyeth them " (Job 12:23); " Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want " (Ps. 23:1); " O Jehovah, thou preservest man and beast " (Ps. 36:6); " He sendeth forth springs into the valleys " (Ps. 104:10). The whole of Psalm 104 is given up to recounting the power of God which is ever active and constant.

Provi-
dence.

This teaching refutes that which says that God and the world are one. It also opposes emphatically the idea that the only power behind things is a blind force. There is a positive note about it which is in striking contrast to the agnostic's silence. It is urgent in putting forth a personality to explain the origin, continued existence and meaning of the world; and to provide a reason for the onward movement of the whole towards a moral end. There is wide room for the exercise of the speculative powers, yet at the same time there is provided the only successful and satisfying account of the universe.

The Bible
has a
philos-
ophy.

Popularly
illus-
trated.

These profound thoughts are repeated, emphasized and ramified by illustrations in popular and poetic language of their truth in all spheres of nature. Mountains, rivers, rocks, clouds, lightnings, rainbows, and stars are called upon for evidence. The plants of the field, and the animals of the land, air and water are marshalled forth in their classes, and according to their habits, to prove "the hand that made them is Divine."

II. *Man.*

The Bible is not a text-book on physiology, biology or psychology. Neither has it been put forth by God as an outline of ancient human history. Nevertheless there are many interesting facts and references given which prove to be enlightening.

Extensive
history.

The facts which the Bible gives about man, historically considered, are worth while. We have in another place noticed the exhaustive history of the Jewish race which it gives; its wide range of references to contemporary nations in their policies, treaties, wars and downfalls; its reflection of the world of its day. It makes besides this, incidental reference to

the history of early humanity, bridging an otherwise prehistoric chasm, and filling it with credible facts.

There is a storehouse of facts concerning the superstitions, credulities, hereditary customs, modes of thought and general character of men at various stages of man's history. There is an implied development of the race, in apprehension of truth, in morality, and in individuality.

Quite a complete treatise on the structure of man as a rational being could be written on the basis of indirect and incidental references in the Scriptures.¹ It would be a most attractive study, to follow out the tripartite doctrine of spirit, soul and body found in the Bible, especially in the New Testament, and in Paul's epistles in particular. Not in any formal way, but by maxims, proverbs, parables and appeals it hints at man as a free, thinking, responsible, self-conscious being, that possesses conscience, soul, spirit, body, mind, heart and will.

Hints on
psychol-
ogy.

1. The origin of man is treated directly. The idea which the doctrine of materialistic evolution gives of the origin of man is not the biblical one. Man has

Man's
origin.

¹ See Olshausen's *New Testament Psychology*.

not come by direct generation from the beast. It says that God made the beasts "after their kind." It affirms that "God created man in his own image." It leaves wide room for the method and manner of creation, but it never fails to emphasize the agency of God in every step.

Character.

2. The Bible affords an appreciation of human character keener than can be found anywhere. Other books show men in dress parade; this shows them in their homes and at their work, where all adventitious influences are absent. In other books the personal equation of the writer enters in to palliate weakness, conceal facts, and exaggerate deeds; here men are weighed by the unchanging standards of light and truth. It gives an abstract presentation of conduct, and analyzes motives with rare discrimination. The book of Proverbs especially is rich in these incisive views. But generally the concrete example is presented, and the effects of character on conditions and conditions on character are seen; and the consequences, which result from different combinations of moral traits, and from various modes of action are ascertained to a practical certainty. The

patriarch in the midst of herdsmen and traders; Moses and his associates in a period of nation-forming; Gideon in warrior times; Solomon in the courtier life of the monarchy; Amos in the approaching disaster of the nation; Daniel in the midst of flattering hypocrites in exile; Paul surrounded by the unspeakable corruption of a decaying civilization. It is "divine philosophy teaching by example."¹

3. The kinship of man with God is one of the most fruitful thoughts ever given to the world. "God created man *in his own image*" (Gen. 1:27). "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:6); "But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8); "The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah" (Prov. 20:27); "He is the image and glory of God" (I. Cor. 11:7); "Who are made after the likeness of God" (James 3:9). Being made in the image of God suggests that man has self-knowledge and the power of self-direction; can discern right from wrong;

Made in
God's im-
age.

¹ See C. E. Stowe in *The Teachers' Indicator*, pp. 157-159.

can commune with God; and above all can work for the same ends for which God works. He can be an imitator of God (Eph. 5: 1), which does not mean a parrot-like follower, but a living, conscious worker for the same ideal.

The Bible teaches that the self-centered life is suicidal. To find the true life, the abundant life, one must lose his life. He must live, not as apart from the world, but as a part of it. He must make God his dwelling place. He must see that the "will of God" is the law to follow if his life will attain its fullest development. He must learn that true freedom is his will following the "will of God." And that he may have the matter more concretely set before him he is persuaded to live *in Christ*.

Man a
social be-
ing.

4. The life that is in God is social. Man made in the image of God is expected to be social. Worship; the reciprocal duties of the home; the principles which should underlie the community, city and state; the character and obligations of rulers, judges, merchants, etc.; the questions of charity, industry, marriage, etc., all receive vital treatment.

III. *God.*

The Bible nowhere proves that God exists; it assumes his existence. It takes that for granted which is the only congruous explanation of our mental and moral natures, and of the material world,—a First Cause, intelligent, personal, infinite and perfect. It takes for granted the existence of a supernatural order.

1. The fact of a revelation of God is insisted on from first to last. The claim is made and maintained throughout that God has manifested himself in the physical universe; in man's constitution and through his "inward parts"; in the events and trend of history; and in a special way in Jesus Christ. This revelation can be seen by the natural mind, but perceived more fully by the spiritually minded.

God has
revealed
Himself.

Professor A. B. Davidson, makes this distinction between Greek and Hebrew philosophy: the Greeks aimed at *discovering* God in nature; the Hebrews aimed at *recognizing* him whom they knew.¹ To the Hebrew the world was an instrument by which God communicated himself. It was the expression of the character of God. "Nature red in tooth and claw" is

The world
a mani-
festation
of God.

¹ Biblical and Literary Essays, p. 30.

not biblical. Love and sacrifice, and not selfishness, impurity, malevolence and hatred, are the primal laws of the world. Everywhere justice is triumphant. The law that sin works out death; that wrong is not triumphant; that the ways of the good and the bad are not equal is not confined to any race, time, clime or sphere. The world does not promise what it does not give. Men may *imagine* promises, and they may not be fulfilled. But the world and our faculties, when in their normal condition, working in conjunction with our reason, give us the truth. There is no caprice in the laws of the world. The world can be relied upon to bring forth spring-time and harvest in their seasons. The love, justice, veracity, constancy and holiness of God were evident to the Hebrew in his creation. Redemption after disintegration was another universal process of the world which revealed him. His wisdom and power were seen on every hand. And not in the physical universe alone, but in every sphere, his character was expressed. Even life and freedom are manifestations of him. All this the Bible contends for and yet stops short of pantheism. "In him we live, and move,

and have our being." (Acts 17:28.)
 "The whole earth is full of his glory."
 (Isa. 6:3.) God is immanent in the
 world, yet the world does not constitute
 God.

2. The Scriptures mark three distinctions in the being of God,—Father, Son, and Spirit. Each is spoken of as God. "Him the Father, even God, hath sealed" (John 6:27). "The great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). "Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God" (Acts 5:3, 4). These distinctions are eternal. The Son was "in the beginning" with the Father. The Spirit was brooding upon the face of the waters. The three are equal. Officially, the Father is first, the Son, second, and the Spirit, third; but there is no inferiority of one compared with the others. "We do not say that one God is three Gods, nor that one person is three persons, nor that three Gods are one God, but only that there is one God with three distinctions in his being."¹ The Father is the authorizing power, the Son, the obeying power, and the Spirit, the realizing power. Or, as Phillips Brooks put it,

He is re-
 vealed as
 Trinity
 in hu-
 man
 society.

¹ Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 168.

the Father is end, the Son, method, the Spirit, power. Here is a rich, wonderfully rich, vein of thought which may be followed to wide limits. Pursuing the line of thought of the preceding paragraph, the Bible would have men recognize God everywhere. This suggests that we look for him in society. What are the basal principles of society? Authority, Obedience, Realization—End, Method, Power. In government we discover the judicial, legislative and executive departments. In the family, church, city, and state there are these three functions. The social life of man manifests the social life in God. The Fatherhood, sonhood and spirithood of God run through humanity. The Trinity is stamped on the world.

Bible
problems.

3. The problems of thought with which the men of the Bible wrestled belonged to one general class. They endeavored to show how certain things, apparently inconsistent with the character of God, can be reconciled with his goodness. They attempt to interpret those things in such a way that the mind may find peace in their presence. The three chief discussions are the following:

(1) The prosperity of the wicked (Psalms 17, 37, 39, 49 and 73).

(2) The calamity of the just. The entire book of Job is given to it.

(3) How to be happy in this life. The book of Ecclesiastes devotes itself to this.

4. The fact of a Divine Power in the universe "which makes for righteousness," is pointed out to the intelligent. The Scriptures call attention to one who applies a balm to the heart of oppressed virtue; who carries the yoke with the misunderstood and oppressed benefactor; who puts new life into those crushed by the heel of tyranny; who turns into defeat the apparent triumph of evil-doers. "Jehovah upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that are bowed down" (Ps. 145); "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low" (Isa. 2:17); "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (Jas. 4:6). There is a Strength for men which comes to aid them where their strength ends, and which carries their good deeds to a more glorious issue.

God works
towards
an end.

All these truths and more the Bible

The in-
tellect's
gym-
nasium.

supplies as food to the mind. At the opening of the chapter we said that it provided exercise as well as food. So it does. Besides giving truth, it gives strength and steadiness. It strengthens the imagination. Almost one-half of the books of the Old Testament are poetry and a large part of the rest are poetical in spirit. The allusions and suggestions, which are constantly made, force the reader into wide fields, which, of course, will develop him. Often there must be a struggle to grasp the meaning, because it is not all tropics with fruits ready to pick and eat; much of it belongs to other zones and yield only by "the sweat of the face." It calls for search, thought and judgment. When sympathetically laid hold of it has power to enlighten the mind with a peculiar quickening and exhilaration. Always on a level of high thinking, it never descends to the vain and imbecile, but wins respect, and appeals to the best intelligence with a challenge.¹

The Bible
and
"isms."

From the foregoing it will be seen how satisfactory the Bible is to the mind compared with the "isms" of the world. Atheism is contradicted by the direct cer-

¹ See Stowe, op. cit. pp. 167-169.

tainty of God existing in the mind; materialism by the separation of soul and body; pantheism by personality; deism by providence; rationalism by miracles; pessimism by hope; agnosticism by positive affirmations; positivism by man's need of the spiritual. It is firm in its opposition to the Buddhistic ideas of theosophy. Against the vapid views of Christian Science it affirms the believability of the senses, the actuality of matter, the value of medicine, the fact of sin, the personality of God and the reality of redemption. It has the modicum of truth in all the "isms," which have any worth, without their error and extremes. Its completeness and consistency of thought are a rest to the mind.

CHAPTER VI.

PEERLESS MORAL GUIDANCE.

Shows how
to mani-
fest God
in us.

IN the records of ancient times which the Bible gives, and especially in the story of Israel's experiences, we have three things along the line of morals made plain. First, God desires to be revealed in the life of men. Secondly, it is possible for man to reveal God and in so doing to attain to a remarkable degree of moral perfection. And, thirdly, the principles which will guide man to this end are given in the Scriptures and conscience.

These records and moral teachings may not be attractive in some ways to the transgressor, yet, secretly, he admires them and will scorn any less moral. The seeker after righteousness finds in the Word, a lamp unto his feet and light unto his path (Ps. 119: 105).

I. *Contents which Raise Questions.*

Many devoted lovers of the Book are troubled by certain statements in it. They

cause them dismay. They are filled with confusion when they cannot answer the scoff of enemies. They sometimes wish those features were not there.

They question certain narratives which to them seem revolting.

1. The extermination which is said to have been prosecuted at the command of Jehovah shocks them; such, for instance, as the expedition against the Amalekites undertaken by Saul under the auspices of Samuel (1 Sam. 15), and the slaughter of fifty thousand men of Bethshemesh who looked into the ark. They dislike the sins, which are said to have been tolerated in Israel as a nation. Blood revenge was practised. "But if any harm follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (Ex. 21:23-25). Polygamy was indulged in by Lamech, Abraham, Esau, Jacob, Gideon, David, Solomon and others. It was tolerated by the law apparently, as intimated in Ex. 21:10; 1 Sam. 1:2; and 2 Chr. 24:3. Easy divorce seems to have been a general thing and allowed by the law (Deut. 21:14).

Wars of extermination, said to have been ordered and the immoralities tolerated.

Immoral-
ities of
heroes.

2. Another matter which creates consternation is the hero-worship rendered to men who have grave imperfections. Noah was so stupefied with wine that he was beastly, yet it is said of him, "Noah was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations: Noah walked with God" (Gen. 6:9). Lot became drunk, and was guilty of incest, yet we are told that God "delivered righteous Lot" (2 Pet. 2:7). Jacob, crafty, cunning, practising selfish strategy, mercenary, and servile, is yet represented as a favorite of heaven; and his name, changed to Israel, was given to a nation. Jael, treacherously and brutally ending Sisera's life, having invited him to partake of her hospitality, is eulogized by Deborah the prophetess. "Blessed above women shall Jael be" (Judg. 5:24). Samson, leader of massacres and victim of amorous passions, is given a place in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews with Abraham and Moses. David lied, feigned idiocy, practised polygamy, seduced Bathsheba, and murdered her husband Uriah, yet he is called by God, "a man after my heart" (Acts 13:22).

Imprecations.

3. A third feature of Scripture which causes surprise to many, and gives a chance

for caviling to others, is the imprecatory passages. These are found in Psalms 7, 35, 58, 69, 109, 137, 139, 149 and others. There are also passages outside of the Psalms, for example, Lam. 3: 64-66, and Jer. 15:15. In these passages are found what, on the surface at least, seems to be personal animosity, sinful rage, blasting curses and inhuman wishes that the enemy's life be cut short, his prayers be unanswered, and his end be destruction.

What can be said to these things? What relief can be extended to the one who is dismayed and whose mouth is stopped? I call special attention to the following quotations as affording an admirable summing up of biblical morality.

Principal Ottley, calling attention to three kinds of morality in Scripture, says, "The morality of the Old Testament is a phrase to be used with discrimination. There is the morality which God tolerates as the best that can be attained under the conditions and circumstances of those with whom he is dealing. There is the morality which he approves and delights in because it rises above the average level of the age in which it appears. There is the morality at which he aims,—the final or perfect

Must make
distinc-
tions.

morality which is disclosed in the spotless life of Jesus Christ." He further goes on to show that the morality, which was hateful to God, was that which showed retrogression of any kind.¹

Professor J. F. McCurdy, in an article on the subject, writes, "We must distinguish between practises which are wrong in themselves and those which were (or are) permissible under certain conditions, but are normally reprehensible. The latter class fall under the head of social institutions which along with the approving sentiments of the community are gradually eliminated by the Christianizing and humanizing of society. Of the former we may say that they were wrong from the beginning. Thus it will be generally agreed that it was always wrong to lie, steal, cheat, murder." ²

Professor George R. Berry, on the subject of tolerated sins, says, "This tolerance was no compromise with sin. The Old Testament was not designed to be a comprehensive and complete manual of ethics. The Bible was rather given as an aid in the moral training of the Hebrew

¹ *Aspects of the Old Testament*, p. 421.

² *Bib. World*, vol. 23, p. 409.

nation. It gives a general moral training rather than specific moral commands for those evils which general training gradually and more effectively removes than specific commands would." ¹

If we bear these things in mind the moral difficulties will be less disturbing. The facts will then appear in their true light. They are the weaknesses and faults of men, sometimes of men the main trend of whose lives was godly. These faults are not approved by the Bible; they are sometimes allowed, but not supported by God; they are later condemned by other parts of the book, and by the Bible as a whole.

Explan-
ation.

Regarded thus, these features appear in order that the world might know that Israel's men obeyed God in spite of awful temptations; that the human soul has before it possibilities of awful sin and degradation; that the development of a man and of a race morally is a long process; that the Heavenly Father is full of patience, pity and pardon.²

The imperfections of heroes are not approved by the Bible, even if it be silent in regard to many of them. As a matter of

¹ *Bib. World*, vol. 21, p. 202.

² See G. F. Herrick in *Bib. Sac.*, vol. 42, pp. 601 ff.

fact, the sins of the Old Testament worthies were punished. The praise bestowed upon them, and the place of honor given to them, were granted, not because their faults were overlooked, but because they were judged by the general trend of their lives and by their privileges. And further, it must be remembered that the men of those days must be weighed, bearing in mind that they were immature compared with the Christian standard. Their measure of light was limited by their ability to see.

In regard to the accounts which attribute to God commands to exterminate armies and peoples, there is this much at least to be said. God raises and lays low. By laws which he has planted in the constitution of things the degenerate nation falls into dissolution before the advance of the nations which walk in his ways. His purpose of progress cannot be thwarted with impunity. But having said this, we affirm our belief that God never asked a conquering nation to commit horrible atrocities, either in general or detail, and never approved of cruel passions. The participants in such repulsive actions may have supposed that they had the sanction of God, —indeed, we find the early Hebrews some-

times referring evil directly to God,—but we cannot believe that he ever tempted man to be inhuman. Taking this view, these features will not make the moral teachings of the Bible unattractive.

The moral teachings of the Bible are not marred by the imprecatory passages. Bible ethics as a whole, and especially the ethics of the New Testament, condemn their sentiments. It may be granted that they do not express a purely personal spirit, but are the attitude toward evil men taken by persons who identified themselves with God's interests.¹ Yet under this most favorable view they are the product of men whom the Scriptures can justify only for their zeal, and can but condemn for their bitterness. Whatever interpretation may be given to these passages, the Bible frees God from the accusation of inspiring sentiments of hatred and vengeance in men against their fellow men. The passages force upon us the duty of differentiating, as Archdeacon Hessey says, "between righteous anger against vice and wickedness and unchastened anger, which leads men to pray for or take in hand requital on their personal oppressors."

¹ W. T. Davison, *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, *Psalms* "vi. 5.

There is no moral teaching in the Scriptures, nor is there any narrative, which need create a demand for "an expurgated book, such as Ulphilas gave to the warlike Goths," when he omitted the records of the Jewish wars. Our Bible is a better teacher of morals because there is in it no trace of dilettanteism.

II. *Supremacy as Moral Guide.*

Conscience
presup-
posed.

In considering any guide for moral life we must presuppose conscience and the moral intuitions. These are not supplanted by any guide. They may be enlightened, and need to be, but their authority must not be nullified. Their assent is necessary before any action can be moral.

Insuf-
ficiency
of arti-
ficial
systems
of
morals.

Men everywhere have recognized that the average man, if not every man, needs outside guidance, in order that his steps may be led aright. Superior men have endeavored to render this assistance to their less fortunate fellows, and have therefore framed systems of morals for their benefit. But all these systems have proved inadequate. No mere man can be sympathetic enough, universal enough, and impartial enough to provide a system,

equally fitted for all, as far as the control of their outward actions is concerned. And much less can a human being provide a system that can adapt itself to every age. And to invent a system that will help make a man moral within, as well as without, to man is impossible. Rules for the outward life are helpful, maxims are useful; but no Epictetus or Marcus Aurelius is sufficient for this thing.

Men have sometimes thought that the light of nature is guide enough. It might be helpful to a few rare souls to a great degree. Their own finer feelings and sentiments might speak to them of the good, the true and the beautiful. The great world without might breathe of justice, love, veracity, constancy, beauty and peace. But it has no message of an atoning God, who redeems, who strengthens, and who saves. And to the mass of humanity, without any other help, their own heart-beats would be deafening, in what would be to them a mute and silent world.¹

Light of
nature
not
enough

The best guide is God's Word, and for the following reasons:

1. The morality of the Bible is religious. The apparently external had an

¹ See B. B. Edwards in *Bib. Sac.*, vol. 3, pp. 22 ff.

Bible morality religious and stimulating.

inner significance. It begins with the springs of conduct, and supplies motives, affections and knowledge, which at once enable a man to become pure within, and consequently without. There are secondary motives often offered, it is true, such as happiness, the hope of reward, and the fear of punishment; and these have their place. But the fundamental motive, and the most ennobling and impelling ever given to the world, is the manifestation of God by men. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31); "that in all things God may be glorified" (1 Pet. 4:11). Objects of supreme worth are presented in men; in the world of nature; in truth; in good character; and in God as revealed everywhere, but especially in Jesus Christ. The mind is purified, invigorated, and furnished with appropriate knowledge.

It gives a balanced life.

2. By the commands and exhortations of the Word a balanced life is ordered. Personality is not destroyed. The idiosyncrasies, natural to the individual, may be allowed. Yet where disorder prevails; where there is an excess of one-sidedness; where there is a smothering of some power

or virtue, there harmony is insisted upon. The end in view is a well-rounded life, a full realization of the rich life, by having every normal faculty at its best, and doing its utmost. This is living unto God.

3. The prohibitions of the Bible, as are its commands, are universal in their character. There may be a special application, yet there is embodied a general principle. In this way the freedom of the individual is not violated, his will is not crushed. His conscience is quickened, and his judgment exercised. And the prohibitions, too, begin with the inner life. They go behind the overt act, behind even the half-formed desire, to the very first tendency to evil in the heart. Wavering is wrong. Hesitation even is sin (Matt. 5:28).

Prohibi-
tions re-
spect
freedom.

4. The vision of the main purpose of life, of the life which obedience to that purpose creates and of the life inconsistent with that purpose, is further strengthened by an example of perfect life in Jesus Christ, which forever stimulates, steadies and lures onward. In him the world has a standard of conscience which can never become obsolete.

A perfect
Example.

III. *Wide Range of Duties.*

1. We may notice first, man's duties to the world, and especially the world of men.

Man's duties to man are based upon the character of God. "I am Jehovah" furnishes a reason for perfect society. If God is to be manifested by man socially, man must live righteously in his social relations. Hence the exhortations of the Bible to refrain from the great sins against society—murder, robbery, bribery, cruelty, drunkenness, obstinacy, conceit, lying, malice, oppression, dishonesty, indiscriminate dealing out justice, and lack of sympathy.

In the
prophets.

The prophets are the great teachers of altruism. Their ideal was a glorious community in which the law would be service. In them brotherly-kindness, equality of opportunity and sympathy for the weak first find voices. From the sermons of Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos and Micah there could be compiled, and that by mere quotation, a quite complete manual of social ethics.

In Prov-
erbs.

The book of Proverbs covers a very wide field too. If one were to take it, pencil in hand, and read it through, and mark the things one should avoid, he might have a

list as follows: anger, breach of confidence, contention, deeds of violence, disdainfulness, dissimulation, evil machinations, flattery, greed, hatred, indolence, ingratitude, jealousy, land-stealing, lying, oppression of the poor, revenge, slander and treachery. Then if one should read again, and mark what things to cherish, he would have such a list as this: charity towards another's faults, considerateness, courage in delivering the innocent, fidelity in friendship, helpfulness, justice, kind words, kindness toward an enemy, liberality, love, mercy, tact in speaking, uprightness, and wisdom in treating with a foolish person.¹

The Epistles of the New Testament abound in practical suggestions on the subject of duty to one another. It is Paul's habit to indoctrinate first, and then apply his truth to life. The latter part of his letters are always given up to precepts.

In the
Epistles.

The Bible is not silent on the matter of political morality. The men who wrote it were too close to public affairs not to have politics referred to in their writings. Israel as a nation was compelled to work out the problems of national morality, and the solution of those problems are given

Political
morality.

¹ See Charles F. Kent in *Bib. World*, vol. 3, pp. 198 ff.

to us. It would not be expected, of course, that here we could find page and verse to solve all the questions in detail, which arise in our modern complex political life. What we do find are the broad principles upon which national stability and progress depend. National weal or woe depends on the well or ill-doing of the individual citizens. Nations, as well as individuals, are included under the inviolable law of duty and retribution. Rulers, judges and magistrates are responsible to God and man. A country's well-being consists in justice, righteousness and reverence to God. Better that the nation perish than that the citizens be disloyal to God and duty. The history of Jehovah's words to the kings of Israel by the prophets, and his dealings with them; the warnings of the prophets to the inhabitants of Israel and Judah; and the doom of the disobedient nations all teach these things. Examples of the teachings may be found in Jer. 8:18-9:16; 32:16-35; Amos 1-2.¹

Economic
morality.

Economic rights and duties receive much notice. Many of their economic laws no doubt were adapted to their peculiar manner of life, and to that stage of civilization,

¹ See J. F. McCurdy, *Bib. World*. vol. 24, pp. 17, 18.

and might not be suitable under different conditions and circumstances to-day. Yet the underlying principles are eternal and unchangeable. Quotations might be multiplied, but I shall make but a few. A man has a right to the reward of his labor. "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (1 Tim. 5:18). The wages should be adequate. "Masters, render unto your servants that which is just and equal" (Col. 4:1). Cheating in trade is forbidden. "The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vapor driven to and fro by them that seek death" (Prov. 21:6). Men are not absolute owners of land or beasts, but users. "The earth is Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof" (Ps. 24:1); "For every beast of the forest is mine, And the cattle upon a thousand hills" (Ps. 50:10). There should be a limitation of monopoly. "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land!" (Isa. 5:8). No man should be forced into a condition of poverty. "What mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind the face of the poor? saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts" (Isa. 3:15).

2. The duties of a person to himself

Duty to
self.

are mentioned, not so much directly as indirectly. There is a constant undertone which repeats over and over "What shall a man give in exchange for his life?" Care for the body and all the faculties of mind and heart is enjoined. The preparation needed in order to live to the glory of God is man's duty to himself. But here we pass over into the spiritual sphere, and therefore we shall leave the subject for fuller discussion in the next chapter.

Duty to
God.

3. The supreme duty impressed upon us is the glory of God. That done, all duties to self and others are fulfilled, because glorifying God consists in sobriety, honesty, sympathy, justice, truthfulness, etc. But apart from these there are personal, peculiar and direct obligations which man owes to God. These are absolute surrender, reverence, worship, honor, trust, obedience, communion, etc. But here again we infringe upon the subject of our next chapter, and we stop.

CHAPTER VII.

UNIQUELY EXPERT SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS.

THE teachings of the Bible, though they may be regarded as for the intellect and morals, are ultimately spiritual. The fundamental and real things, which lie behind, and at the spring of all visible, audible, and thinkable things, are the matters treated. And the truths given are the most important ever announced.

I. *The Spiritual Teachings.*

1. Concerning the Being and Relations of God, of God, Man, and the World.

The books of all religions, either directly or indirectly, deal with these great questions. But there is no treatment anywhere so satisfactory to both reason and conscience as in the Bible. So daring and sublime are the conceptions, and yet so consistent and worthy of all confidence, that there is nothing else in the world which wins and holds the attention of men as the "Epic of Redemption" does.

(1). The Bible does not speak of God from a philosophical standpoint, but from a practical. His being and attributes are sketched with boldness and directness. He is a personal spirit "infinite, eternal and almighty, most holy, just and wise, most merciful and loving."¹ No other representation of Deity in his majesty and perfection as that given in the Scriptures, can be found in any other religion. The God of the Bible is adorable.

The world
reveals
God.

(2). The explanation given of the world of men and things, as the manifestation of God, calls only for mention, since it has been noticed at sufficient length in Chapter V. In this answer to the questions, "What does the world mean?" "Why does it exist?" the Bible shows its immeasurable superiority to atheism, agnosticism, and pantheism. It gives an answer, which not only satisfies the intellect, but which speaks peace to the heart. If God's purpose in the world be a full and unmarred manifestation of himself, then we have a pledge of the banishment of injustice, selfishness, impurity, deceit, and malevolence.

¹ *The School Catechism*. Issued by a conference of the Reformed Churches of Scotland. (Wm. Blackwood & Sons, Edin. & Lond.—1909.)

(3). The profound insight into the nature of sin belongs to the Word of God alone. There is no attempt to theorize on the origin of sin. The practical here, too, as on nearly all other questions, alone receives attention. In other religions the sin is in the outward act; here it is in the heart. The responsibility for sin is placed on the man who commits it; because sin is a refusal on the part of a free moral being to choose to manifest God, and is the choice of the false, the loathsome and the devilish. It is ignorant independence desiring, leaning toward, and working the deeds of darkness. In its essence it is not so much against self or society, as it is against God.

“ Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,
And done that which is evil in thy sight ;
That thou mayest be justified when thou speakest,
And be clear when thou judgest.” (Ps. 51:4.)

Nowhere else is sin made to appear in its real character, its hideous awfulness. Its train of evil consequences is shown in the uncontrollable effects of one's sins on his progeny, and on the nation. Haggai speaks of corruption being more contagious than holiness (2: 12, 13). It is laid bare as the blight of the world, the cause of sorrow, toil, and death. “ The whole creation

groaneth and travaileth together until now" (Rom. 8:22). It has man chained in bondage, so that it is impossible for him to break away from its thralldom, and every moment the fetters are tightening their grip. So long as he remains in slavery, eternal and accumulating woe stares him in the face.

Penitence
and
trust.

(4). Man's choice of sin did not thwart the purpose of God. He redeemed man from the life of sin to the life of sonship; and without transgressing man's freedom he made him adopt the life of holiness. The story of how it was done is the real story of the world's history. It is the central message of the Bible.

Not alone by increase of knowledge, multiplication of good deeds and eradication of vices is the life of sons attained. From the very first the need of repentance and faith is emphasized. The gate into the larger life is passed through by stooping. The condition of repentance is impressed upon men by the revealed attitude of God toward sin. The attitude of trust is inculcated by the hopefulness of God, revealed in his promise given at the beginning, and repeated over and over to patriarch, lawgiver, psalmist and prophet, that

redemption from sin is in store for the world; and by his revealed love and desire to pardon. The need of repentance and faith were supremely stamped on men's minds "in the fulness of time" by the atonement of Christ. The New Testament writers make every possible effort to convince the world of the importance of the fact. It is spoken of as propitiation, ransom, sacrifice and substitution, but these figures all convey one truth, viz., God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, by showing it his attitude toward its sin and his love and hope for its redemption, and by working in a living way in them who look, the spirit of trust and penitence. In this teaching of the "narrow gate" and the "straitened way" the Bible is alone among sacred books.

The spirit of repentance and faith in man, then, is due to God. The spiritual life for which this spirit is the preparation, is wrought by him also. This is the testimony of Scripture. "Turn us, O God of our salvation" (Ps. 85:4); "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10); "Born, not of blood, nor of the will of

Redemp-
tion is
Co-opera-
tive.

the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God " (John 1:13).

But Scripture asserts also that man, too, has to do with the beginning of the new life. "Cast away from you all your transgressions" (Ezek. 18:31); "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways" (Ezek. 33:11); "But as many as received him, to them gave he the right" (John 1:12); "Awake, thou that sleepest" (Eph. 5:14).

Both aspects can be reconciled. God is the efficient cause; man is the conditional cause. God has the spiritual life to give; man is the free being who can choose or refuse it. Without God giving man can never have; without man allowing God can never give. God's holiness, love, justice, hatred of sin, sorrow for sin, etc., are dammed up against the sluice-gates of every life. Man's sinfulness does not allow the divine stream near the wheels. Man then gets the spirit of trust and penitence, and consequently raises the sluice-gates. Thus doing he fulfils the condition upon which the life is made anew. He chooses the life of God.

Sanctification is a process,

Perfection does not take place instantaneously; it comes after a process of

growth. The first choice is a fundamental one, and will influence all after choices; but it is not the only choice one must make. Knowledge of what sin is, and what the God-life is, will become clearer, and will necessitate many choices. The essential character of the spiritual man is sinless; but in every spiritual man there are remains of sin, because the knowledge and consciousness of sin are only gradually crystallized, and the knowledge of certain spiritual activities is only gradually apprehended. To help man in this process of growth, God gives his Spirit, who uses various agencies. He cares for his own and reveals his secrets to them. He helps them to grasp religious opportunities. See Psalms 34 and 91; Isa. 43; the books of Daniel, Haggai and Zechariah.

(5). The life of sons reaches its highest earthly development, not through retiring from the world of men, nor by individuals living among men yet working independently for personal improvement; but by union with others whose effort also is to glorify God in their lives. The social life of righteous people, joined together for mutual good and for altruistic purposes, is the highest manifestation of the

The highest manifestation of God is in the life of the church.

God-life possible in the present world. Teaching this, the Bible, both by precept and illustration, encourages the redeemed to unite into one brotherhood in order to attain to the life that was in Jesus Christ, and, as his "body," to continue to exemplify to the world the attitude of God toward sin, and his loving purpose of redemption. Thus the church will be an eternal force in the world, building up the "body" intensively and extensively until at last society will be universally righteous to the glory of God. Here, again, the Bible goes deeper than any other religious book, by showing that the permanent purification of society will be attained, not through any process of mere reformation, but through its regeneration.

God's perfect revelation demands a future.

(6). The limitations of space and time prevent a perfect manifestation of God by his body, the church; hence the Bible postulates a hereafter. Not from the nature of man, but from the character and purpose of God, and from the nature of holiness, which to subsist must maintain, express and communicate itself, must we believe in a life hereafter, where God will not come short of the consummation of his purpose.

In this connection the Scriptures assert that the righteous will be rewarded. The reward will be the enjoyment of a self that has become godlike. It will be the peace, joy and aspiration of godliness. There is also the warning of retribution for the wicked. It is the rebound in and upon life of sin. It is the reflex influence of disobedience. It is the negative, uncertain, inharmonious and remorseful condition of the one who refuses to let God be manifested through him. Here again the Bible deals with the question in a practical way, and refrains from speculation.

Reward
and re-
tribu-
tion.

2. Concerning the Religious Inner Life.

(1). The deep, unequaled insight of the Word into the questions of sin, penitence and faith has been indicated in a general way. We should not fail to notice that it first called the world's attention to *the different forms and causes of sin*, and *the varieties of religious experience* in individuals.

The moral law is violated, not only in the lion-like way, but also in the serpent-like. Sin is not only a matter of violent transgression; it may be also a matter of pure indifference. A man's weakness may

Varieties
of sin.

be due, not only to faculties abnormally developed, but also to atrophied abilities. The causes or motives lying back of the outward act of wrong may be varied. One man may be bound by inferior ties, a second may be blind to his possibilities, a third may be hoodwinked by the mirage of the "far country," a fourth may be cursed by his fondness for conventionality, and so on.

Varieties
of saving
impulses.

The Bible shows the new life as twelvigated. It can be reached from many directions. The man who longs to do the right at any cost; to speak for God to the mighty; to dream the dream of faith in God and man; to inherit at last the house not made with hands, hears in these longings the call of the Spirit, and he comes. The one who sees the march of God, and takes it as his call to arms, enters the city. Loyalty to the religious instincts of the soul leads others. The one of little faith touches the hem of his garment, and lo! she is admitted. The adventuresome soul, anxious to possess the treasures of the untried, launches out into the deep, and he is successful. The lover of the mystical is lured on by the descriptions of the life abundant, and he finds himself "in

Christ." The warm-hearted man, fond of fellowship, is suddenly transformed by the contagion of the character of Jesus. The poor, the halt, the maimed and the blind are brought into the presence of the King and Physician, through the beneficence of the religion for the disadvantaged. Heroic self-sacrifice appeals to some, and the Scripture affirms that in them the life of Calvary is continued.

The types of Christian life are many. There are intellectual Christians, emotional Christians and practical Christians, according as the thoughts, feelings, or activities predominate. There are those who are absorbent, whose soul windows are open, and who wait on the Lord; and those who stoop to lift, and who are in bondage with the bound. Some go on to know the Lord; others make progress by reversion. Some are on the frontier, heroically battling against iniquity, and intolerant against error, while others are doing picket-duty at the base of supplies.

Varieties
of Chris-
tians.

(2) Though the types of Christians may be many, there are nevertheless certain *moods common to all*. I mention some of them.

The Christian regards man as his

Kinship. brother, and God as his Father. He has enthusiasm for humanity. He is bound with his fellows in their struggles, triumphs, and injuries. The filial feeling towards God balances the feeling created by the thought of a transcendent God.

Reverence. God is set apart from all things as holy. He is not one with the things which he has made, nor with the forces of the world. He is above history, as the author of the great movements of progress in the nations, races and institutions of the world. He is the hallowed Being, who breathes in our hearts the better desires, and fashions in us our holier conditions.

Loyalty. Every man of God renders allegiance to the things and states which molded him for his good. The family, social, political, and ecclesiastical relations, which are ordained of God for man's help and improvement, find in the Christian a loyal sympathizer. He gives time and energy to the development of his own manhood, and in completing that manhood comes into closer and closer affinity with the world to come. He is loyal to the rule of God in the world, in the life, and in the spiritual world.

Resignation to God's will and co-oper-

ation with it are the ideal attitudes for human beings. Waiting for "his good time," submitting gladly to his dealings, removing all barriers to higher communications, working for the end and law of one's own being, fulfilling human relations, and obeying the eternal principles of righteousness,—this is the part of a true man.

"Perfect love casteth out fear." It inspires trust in God, that he will control nature, that it may provide for us; that he will give strength and diligence, that we may earn the things we need; that he will give justice and the sense of stewardship to men, that they may not withhold from us; that he will continue from day to day to do this as occasion demands it.

The redeemed soul does not forget that he has been forgiven. The thought of his past guilt, God's mercy, and his future need are ever with him. That goodness, which removes his burdens day by day, creates the forgiving spirit within. He puts away pride, envy, malice, and uncharitableness, and becomes patient and kind.

The soul that desires to live the God-life is awake and sensitive to the influences of heaven. The calls, persuasions, ideals,

Obedience.

Serenity.

Magnanimity.

Responsiveness.

and love of God do not come down on dull ears, blind eyes, and dead heart. There is no laziness or torpidity in the one who has been stirred by the sight and voice of God.

Rest.

There is no dismay in the righteous man. He does not fret himself because of evil-doers. He believes that God rules, is present, protects, and triumphs at his pleasure. He hopes for the future, believing in the justice and munificent preparation of God. He rejoices in the present, because above, below and all around he feels the glory of God. He is neither faint nor weary, because within him are the health and strength of God.

II. *The Uniquely Expert Character of the Teachings.*

The foregoing teachings of Scripture show that its spiritual truths are not of that superficial sort, which may be gleaned from the observation of nature, or from human reasoning. But this is not all.

Expert because of authors.

1. There is an *à priori* assumption in favor of their unique character, from the attainments and nature of the people through whom they were given.

All other great religious books were

written by men who were searching after God if haply they might find him. Their statements concerning him and their relations to him were gropings in the dark. The Bible was written by men who had already found God. With a comparatively clear knowledge, and an understanding of him which was ever growing clearer, they spoke of him, and of the experiences of their own relations with him.

The Hebrews were a people specially adapted to receive and transmit spiritual impressions of the truth. The Greek's temperament was artistic; the Roman's was legal; the Anglo-Saxon's is practical; the Hebrew's was religious. The Jew was made capable of delving into the foundations of things. He was mystical in the best sense.

2. Their nature bears evidence of the unique character of these teachings. They are faithful to man's deepest experiences. They meet the vital needs of men as God alone could. In man's extreme hours, when fellow mortal is weak in rendering aid, the Scriptures are a divine help. In affliction they comfort. The Word is adapted to every period of life. When a man is young he may not be able to under-

Faithful to
man's
deepest
experiences.

stand some things; but when he is old they interpret themselves to his heart. It is faithful in its presentation of religious crises, as anyone who has experienced such can testify.

Inexhaust-
ible.

3. Trench, in his *Hulsean Lectures*, calls attention to the inexhaustibility of the Scriptures. Age after age finds new and richer meanings in them. Their truth is limited only by the capacity of men to grasp it. The Reformation found new meaning in Paul. The church had not fully appreciated until then the doctrine of justification by faith. The gospel of missions, of personal work, and of giving, have been found in it, after reading it for centuries. Every great revival of religion, and every great reformation of doctrine, followed some special study of Scripture. At the present new meanings are found in the Gospels, as the Person of Christ is being studied. The doctrines of Inspiration, the Incarnation and the Atonement are not yet exhausted. And the future, with the extension of Christianity into the East, is bound to find new meanings in John.

No man in his lifetime can begin to know the Bible thoroughly, there are so

many diverse elements in it. There is no ready-made order or system in it. It has so much compacted in even small portions. It is replete with sentences which are, as Boyle says, "abridgments of human history." And, in addition to this, it is a comprehensive record of life, and who can exhaust life?

Considering these things we can do nothing else than confess that here is God's word, and pray,

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold
Wondrous things out of thy law" (Ps. 119:18).

CHAPTER VIII.

REASONABLE SUPERNATURALISM.

THOSE who believe in the Bible know and feel right well that from their own present experience, and from the experience of mankind in general, the presumption is strongly against the miraculous. They do not fail to observe, also, that from the standpoint of science, taken by itself, the presumption is against miracles.

Notwithstanding these facts, they claim that the character of the supernatural found in the Bible is of such a nature that, seen clearly, it will appeal to reason, and win its endorsement.

I. *Denials.*

There are certain misconceptions in regard to the supernaturalism of the Scriptures which need to be cleared away.¹

Nature not
fickle.

1. It has been affirmed that to believe in it one must give up all belief in a natural

¹ See Brownlow Maitland, *Miracles*, pp. 11-94, on the subjects of the first and second sections of this chapter.

order of things. The Bible teaches that there are fixed laws which are safe to follow. One can draw inferences from the past for the present and future. One can with very little doubt, depend on the sun's rising to-morrow. The farmer can conclude pretty definitely that harvest will follow sowing. The Bible does imply that nature is not bound by an established fixity of things which is absolute. Science cannot contradict that implication.

2. It has been said that belief in miracles would mean belief in a God, who is changeable, short-sighted, and lacking in power. The highest conception of God which that assertion implies is a fixed God. Its man is a mere machine, and its world a physical thing. With such conceptions, miracles, of course, are impossible. But the world is moral, man is free, and God, though unchangeable in his holiness, is the most variable being in the universe in his activities. It is his glory. He adapts himself to the needs of his free children. He is our Father. His freedom and morality transcend the physical. A free moral God is higher than a fixed God.

3. It is claimed that miracles are absurd because they are supported by the

Bible
miracles
never
contra-
dicted.

testimony of a few against the testimony of multitudes. It would, all things considered equal, be foolish to believe anything against the weight of evidence. But when this claim is made in regard to the miracles of Scripture it is unfair. There is no miracle in the Bible which a few claim to have happened, that a larger number, present at the same time and place, claim did not happen. There is no testimony to the contrary in regard to any of the particulars of the supernatural of Scripture.

But it may be said by some that this does not answer the claim, that the uniformity of nature contradicts the miracles of Scripture. What is the uniformity of nature? Nature is not one simple thing, but has two factors, "elementary forms of action and laws for their combination." Nature is not uniform in the former of these factors; its uniformity pertains to the latter. Now the laws which combine the elementary forms of action are in operation in miracles as in the familiar processes; miracles do not dispense with them nor transgress them; hence the laws do not contradict miracles. The miraculous in miracles belongs to the elementary forms

of action. It differs from the usual forms but nature allows for that, and therefore does not contradict it. Both the uniformity of natural law and the diversity of natural activity are seen in miracle, and hence, nature cannot be truthfully said to contradict the miraculous.¹

4. Men laugh at stories of anomalies, monstrosities, and separate, unrelated prodigies. Some regard the supernatural of the Bible as such. A more thorough and intelligent examination of the facts will reveal a significance in them, and a vital connection with the course of God's moral government of the world.

Not absurd.

5. In addition to the foregoing disclaimers, we shall show in the following pages that this supernaturalism is worthy of deepest consideration, and demands assent and belief from the fact that it has a more stable foundation than human testimony, which many assert to be its only support.

Not human testimony alone.

The supernatural of the Bible, therefore, has nothing irrational in it, and hence is not repulsive because of any unreasonableness.

¹ See Bowne, *Philosophy of Theism*, pp. 208-210.

II. *Assumptions and Presumptions.*

Assump-
tion :
God re-
veals
Himself.

The believer in the supernatural makes certain assumptions which men generally assent to. He assumes that there is a personal living God; that this world, inanimate and animate, manifests God, it is the God-life in space and time; that in Jesus Christ the God-life in its fullest character centers; that Jesus Christ is the supreme agent in accomplishing God's purpose of self-manifestation; and that the highest end of things is moral and spiritual, the physical being only an instrument in the hands of the moral and spiritual.

Presump-
tion :
He need
not fol-
low an
even
course.

Along with these assumptions will go the presumption that the God-life and the God-truth need not, in attaining their full manifestation, follow an even, regular course of development, but may for reasons evident to God, and perhaps later evident to men, come in power at times far beyond the usual. There will be the presumption that, on such extraordinary occasions, there will accompany the extraordinary infusion of life and truth into the world, outward manifestations of it.

Illus-
trated.

These presumptions are reasonable. History affords abundant illustrations. To refer to a recent one: Turkey did not

march on in an even-tenored way towards liberty; in 1908 there was an onward bound. That was the God-life and truth extraordinarily infused into the Turks, and extraordinarily manifested.

The supernatural is the "sign" or evidence of a special presence in power of God, who is always manifesting himself in gradually increasing proportions in this world. The Bible does not regard it as an interruption on the part of God from without the order of nature. It is that order itself at its highest, most like God. It is not nature's law violated, put aside, modified. It is natural law combining activities which are filled out, distended. It is ten thousand volts of life where there were formerly but one thousand. It is a segment of omniscience where there was formerly but a faint streak of light. It will of necessity be accompanied by evidence of it in striking form.

What the
super-
natural
is.

The Bible, then, properly understood shows the supernatural, not as an appendage, as a thing needing independent proof. The evidence, which proves the presence of life or truth in a greatly accentuated form, proves the supernatural which accompanied

it. The connection between them is an inherent one. They stand or fall together.

The Bible is filled with this supernatural. It is more than unobjectionable; it is absorbingly attractive.

III. *The Facts of the Supernatural.*

Fore-
shadow-
ings.

1. Prophecy, the manifestation of the *truth* of God, is seen in three forms.

(1) There are foreshadowings of the facts of God's life and relations with men; his provisions for men; and his expectations and requirements.

a. In the typical characters and offices of the Old Testament, the Hebrews received intimations of the higher life. Moses, Aaron and Melchizedek bring a glimmer of the life of him, who as prophet, priest and king, revealed God in his fulness.

b. In the typical rites and ceremonies in which the Jews were thought to engage, such as those of the Passover, Day of Atonement, etc., the truth concerning the sacrifice of God for man was set forth, involving the ideas of deliverance from punishment, expiation of guilt, and restoration to God's fellowship.

c. In the typical structures and furni-

ture of the tabernacle and temple great spiritual facts were prefigured. The altar of sacrifice spoke of atonement; the laver, of cleansing and renewal; the altar of incense, of prayer; the Shekinah glory, of the presence of Jehovah.

d. In the typical events or scenes other great facts are set forth. Moses, making a covenant with God for his people, typifies Jesus Christ, the Mediator, interceding. Israel delivered from Egypt presents beforehand the great world deliverance from the power of sin. Israel carried into Babylon speaks of judgment and punishment.

e. In the typical precepts and prohibitions the law was the schoolmaster leading to the gospel life.

A careful reading of the Epistle to the Hebrews will show the weight of truth in the types of the Old Testament.¹

(2) Prophecy proper.

Hebrew prophecy was animated by a wide outlook over the future, and a spiritual insight, which grasped the principles that shape the course of human destiny. Presentiments of the outcome of the dispensations of God pervade it. There were aspirations in the prophets which tran-

¹ See A. T. Pierson, *God's Living Oracles*, chap. vii.

scended mere hopes, and grasped the truth of what really would be. All these things exceed the power of unassisted reason, and indicate a divine impartation of truth, beyond the ordinary, at the prophetic period of the world's history.¹

a. A Vision of a World-wide Kingdom.

A uni-
versal
church.

The Jews were a narrow people, separated by training and prepossession from the Gentile world. The people generally were inflated by the belief that they were superior to others, being God's peculiar family; and that they alone would attain a glorious future. But the prophets swept all barriers away and raised the nations to a par with themselves.

“And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it” (Isa. 2:2); “And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one” (Zech. 14:9); “For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the Gentiles, saith Jehovah of hosts” (Mal. 1:11).²

¹ See also Isa. 45:6, 22, 23; 49:6; 60:1, 2, 11; 66:23. Dan. 2:44; Joel 2:28; Mic. 4:1, 2.

² See Maitland, *The Argument from Prophecy*, p. 50 ff.

b. The Agent of the Promise.

All through the Old Testament, Israel is seen to be the instrument in God's hand for the redemption of the world. The agent is spoken of as a Seed, House, Son, King, Servant, Chosen One, etc. At one time Abraham is the agent; at another David; at another their descendants; at another the true believers in Israel; at another the reigning Davidic king; at another a great descendant of David; but always the agent is Israel or a representative of Israel.

Israel or
her rep-
resent-
ative
the agent
of re-
demp-
tion.

The sufferings and character of the agent are dwelt on with emphasis. The sufferings are world-caused and vicarious.¹

The suf-
ferings
and
character
of the
agent
proph-
esied.

“He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter,

¹ W. J. Beecher, *The Prophets and the Promise*, p. 284.

and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth " (Isa. 53: 3-7).¹

The character of the agent is glowingly described. Generally the descriptions may be referred to the nation or some man who may represent it, but sometimes they cannot be affirmed either of the nation or any ordinary man, but are ideal.²

" For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given ; and the government shall be upon his shoulder : and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this " (Isa. 9:6, 7); " I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed " (Dan. 7:13, 14).

The fulfil-
ment.

These prophecies were fulfilled in part in the prophets' day; they were cumulatively fulfilled; and it was the conviction

¹ See also Psalms 22, 118; Isa. 42, 49-52, 61; Dan. 9:24, 27; Zech. 12:10; 13:7.

² Beecher, *The Prophets and the Promise*, p. 348.

of the prophets that they would be eternally fulfilled. Israel would be forever the agent of God's redemptive purpose for mankind.¹ These expectations have been and are being fulfilled. Israel, through the Jewish race, the Jewish religion and its daughter religions, Christianity and Islam, and above all through Jesus Christ, is the light of the world. Their prophecies of sufferings, of the agents' character, and even their ideal prophecies are fulfilled. Jesus is identified with the agent of the promise and is regarded as the culminative fulfilment of prophecy both by himself and the writers of the New Testament. They find him in the Old Testament as the suffering and glorious servant that was to bring salvation to the world. And it cannot be said that this is doing violence to prophecy, for the prophets speak of an eternal fulfilment of the promise to Abraham, and a more glorious fulfilment in the future than ever in the past, by Israel or the representative of Israel.

No people but the Jews in any age of the world ever regarded themselves as God's agent in redeeming the world, and

¹ *Ibid.* p. 256.

none but Israel can in any real sense be said to be such.

c. The Note of the Gospel.

Christian
concep-
tions.

The prophets leaped beyond their day in their conception of God. To them he was not racial or local, nor on a level with human weakness. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55: 8, 9). They rose to spiritual conceptions of worship. To them mere outward sacrifice or ritual was an abomination. True worship is a matter of pure heart and righteousness.

"Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old? will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6:6-8).¹

¹ See also 1 Sam. 15:22; Pss. 40; 6-8; 50:7-10, 13, 14, 23; 51:16, 17; 55:6, 7; 66:3; Hos. 6:6; Joel 2:13; Amos 5:21-24.

They give us the doctrines of the gospel, at least in embryo. Individual responsibility, repentance, faith, forgiveness, and fellowship with God, are sketched with faithfulness. Such passages as Ezek. 18; Psalms 32 and 51; Isa. 57:15; Jer. 31:31-33; Joel 2:28, 29, 32; Zech. 12:10 show this.

In this reaching out beyond their time, into ideas which would not be realized nor thought generally, they display more than human insight. There is no such insight in mere man. The greatest inventions, and the greatest discoveries of scientific and philosophic truths were not made by men centuries in advance of their time. The great inventors were no more than abreast of many men of their day. The great discoverers were but a step ahead of their generation. This is shown by the inventions and discoveries of the first order made coincidentally by men in different countries working independently. Without a Bacon the world would have discovered the truth he gave it, and it would not have waited long. And, in addition to this, in the productions of human intellect there are limitation, incompleteness and lack of symmetry. They are soon out-

More than
human
insight.

grown. Whence, then, these prophetic truths, foreshadowings, and foregleams, so true to their fulfilment though uttered hundreds of years in advance, so universal and so undying? They are supernatural.

(3) Predictions.

Prophecy
includes
predic-
tions.

When one believes prophecy is supernatural, and it is difficult to see how one can do otherwise, it will be easy to believe the individual predictions. The latter are parts of the former, when they have their moral and spiritual environment. They are striking incidents, which show the God-power of the whole prophetic movement. One's belief in the supernatural nature of the Bible's predictive prophecy would be strongly buttressed were he to take the separate predictions concerning Tyre, Philistia, Babylon, Nineveh, etc., and see how history fulfils them; and were he, when doing it, to consider how improbable the exact fulfilment would be in view of the number of details, if they were the words of a mere fortune-teller, he would be still more persuaded of their divine origin.¹

2. Miracles.

The argument for the manifestation of the God-life is the same as for the mani-

¹ See A. T. Pierson, *God's Living Oracles*, Chaps. iv, v.

festation of the God-truth. The reasonable supernaturalism of prophecy and prediction we believe to be established. The like character of miracle can be now shown at shorter length.

(1) Jesus Christ.

In Jesus Christ there appeared in space and time the highest manifestation of the God-life,—purity, meekness, kindness, unselfishness, patience, truthfulness, insight, self-sacrifice, service, majesty and holiness. There never appeared anyone on earth within measurable distance of him. With that character, he, at the same time, claims equality with God. His teachings are remarkable, beyond the power of words to express adequately. He adjusts morality and religion exactly. He makes a practical application of the principles of righteousness to life and works without an error. His whole life, words and works were flawless. Not only was he without fault, he was also full of active and positive life,—the life abundant in all its glory.

The miracle of godliness.

He started a living influence in the world never before approached. Christianity with its beneficent, uplifting, spreading and vast powers is farther from

The miracle of Christianity.

the influences originated by other founders of religions than human creation could have put it.

The miracle of the world's preparation.

There was an antecedent preparation of the world for him. His surroundings were put in order for his advent. Roman political rule was wide, and knowledge of the Greek language was common; the one securing protection and means of travel, the other securing an audience everywhere, and both peoples giving to the world an exhibition of the futility of human endeavor, when not lighted and led by God, in attaining to righteousness.

Explanation.

What explains Jesus Christ? Nothing, if he is not the accentuated life of God in space and time. He is that God-life, which is being manifested in the world and in man slowly and by degrees; but in him that life appeared in all its fulness. He was "the image of the invisible God," which man, at his present rate of manifesting God, cannot reach for ages, if ever. That explains him. He was supernatural. And he was supernatural that he might be God's effective agent, being God-man, in bringing God's great purpose of self-manifestation to pass.

Everything in connection with Jesus

Christ we would now expect to have been supernatural, as they were. We no longer wonder at supernatural birth, knowledge, works and resurrection. They were "signs" of the God-life in its supreme, extraordinary manifestation.

(2) Old Testament Miracles.

How are we to explain Moses, Elijah, Daniel and the other men whose lives and works are so far in advance of their time, and who appeared at crises in the history of the development of the manifestation of the God-life among men? They are explained only by assuming that in them God's life was revealed in greater power than usual. They were supernatural characters. The miracles they wrought were congruous with their characters. They were "signs." Of course, we must say that they were supernatural characters of a lower degree than that of Jesus Christ; but that the God-life shone through them in an extraordinary measure is evident. And their "miracles" were inherent parts of their supernatural life.

Old Testa-
ment
men were
super-
natural.

3. Inspiration.

In addition to the prophetic and miraculous elements, we have in the writings of the Bible as a whole the supernatural.

Belief in
super-
natural
inspira-
tion un-
avoid-
able.

Here is a body of writings, which delves into such great problems of thought as the being of God, the existence of sin, and the immortality of the soul, and brings satisfaction to the mind. They are writings which give truths, such, for example, as those concerning the Trinity, which are undiscoverable by human intelligence, yet which do not conflict with it; but are in harmony with the elementary truths, which are known by immediate experience. In this Book are promises, which could have come only from the spiritual land, because of their loftiness, and because of the consolation they give when tried experimentally. It gives a full revelation of the character of God in Jesus Christ; and, in the earlier parts, though not so full, always makes a portrait of him centuries in advance of the age in which it was written. The truths of the Bible, which refer to the spiritual life, never conflict with the deepest experiences of the few rare souls in the van of God's army, and provide an unequaled ideal for the many who follow. There is a harmony of the various parts, and a binding of the spiritual life and truth of the Bible to historical facts, which shows the whole to have been heaven-

guided. The inspiration of the Bible is supernatural.¹

Prophecy, miracle and inspiration do not seem to be a supernatural which is reasonable only, but one which is also productive of reverence.

¹ See Frank H. Foster in *Bib. Sac.*, vol. 52, pp. 69 ff. 232 ff.

CHAPTER IX.

MOTIVE POWER.

Causes of
vital in-
fluence.

THERE is an authority which is outward, and also one which is inward. The Old Testament has an outward authority because of the position given to it by Jesus and the apostles. Both the Old and New Testaments have an authority for us from the fact that the church, through all the Christian centuries has, both by common consent and the voice of its experts, pronounced them of supreme worth in all matters of faith and conduct.

There is a higher power than the outward. It is the power of intrinsic worth. This is the power of insight, sincerity, earnestness, truth, goodness and love. On this inner worth of the Bible, its outward authority ultimately rests.

The power of this excellence does not end in winning one's approval, confidence and affection; it goes beyond that. One cannot read the Bible in an impersonal

way. He cannot hold it at a distance. Its character and contents lay hold of him in the most personal and vital way. It drives him in upon himself. Just as the sun melts the iceberg, lifts the vapor, and coaxes out the leaves, so the Bible softens, wins, and vivifies.

The Holy Spirit is in the world leading men to live the life that was in Jesus Christ. The Word is his chief agent, and it works along the same lines, but more vitally, in which the world-teachers, the poets, work.

I. *It Works Repentance.*

1. The great poets endeavor to awake a feeling of self-condemnation in sinful men. They picture ignoble men and women so vividly that their readers begin to measure themselves. The Iagos, Guineveres, Lancelots and lesser sinners are disturbed by the portraits.

Self-con-
demna-
tion is
pro-
duced.

The reader of the Bible is made much more uneasy by what he reads than any reader of poetry. A mirror is held up before him in which he cannot fail to find himself. Sinful man is pictured from every possible angle. He is shown as a *transgressor*, who breaks the laws set up

for his guidance in personal matters, and becomes vile, gluttonous, indolent, vain, covetous, etc.; in relation towards others, and becomes unjust, harsh, ungenerous, jealous etc.; in relation to God, and becomes irreverent, unbelieving, cold and disobedient. He is portrayed as an *omitter*, squandering opportunities, neglectful of duties, and failing to attain to his ordained end. In bold and vivid lines he is revealed as *iniquitous*, his mind perverted, his affections degraded, his will weakened, and his talents prostituted, all his faculties disorganized, and the springs of his life corrupted by his uncontrolled inclinations and wicked ways. From Cain, "who slew his brother," to Diotrephes, "who loveth to have the preëminence among them," sinners' portraits are hung in the long "rogues' gallery" of the Book.

In "Becket" Tennyson says,

" We are sinners all,
The best of all not all prepared to die."

The Bible proves it in detail. No reader can escape coming under some part of its sweeping and searching condemnation. The ones who think themselves righteous are nevertheless sinners. The outwardly

moral, guiltless of any gross misconduct, are under sentence. Those hitherto insensible of need find out their perilous plight. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; . . . They have all turned aside, they are together become unprofitable; There is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one: . . . for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:10, 12, 23). The unbelievers, who do not bow to divine authority, and who foolishly choose this world to the next; the evil thinkers, who hold as a sweet morsel the impure thought and the unholy imagination; the unforgiving, who keep the old grudge, and flay with scorn and backbiting; the indifferent, reckless of holiness, heaven and happiness, are all in the broad way that leadeth to destruction, as certainly as are the murderers, adulterers, defrauders and robbers. Christians may strive to obey God, yet they, too, sin every day they live. "Surely there is not a righteous man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccl. 7:20); "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). The Commandments, the Psalms, the Prophecies, the Gospels,

and the Epistles—the supreme court of the spiritual kingdom—pass the sentence upon every son and daughter of Adam, “Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting” (Dan. 5:27).

The facts of original sin, heredity, ignorance, infirmity and environment are considered, and allowance made in view of them, but they are not a sufficient excuse for sin. At the most they are but occasions for, or contributory causes of, sin. The efficient cause is in the will of the sinner, and that holds every one responsible for his own sins. The Word of God brushes away all excuses and fixes the guilt upon the evil-doer. See Ezek. 18.

This does not say that one is not held to be, in some measure, responsible for another's sins, if his actions produced the occasion or temptation for that other's evil doing. The very opposite is the teaching of Scripture. A man is held responsible, not only for his own sin, but for the evil effects which follow from it; and for the eternally increasing blight upon the lives of growing multitudes which issues from it. Every sinner can see himself with an inverted pyramid of sins resting upon him for every sin, even the smallest, which he

ever committed; and these pyramids forever growing in weight, and forever spreading evil consequences more and more upon a burdened world.

2. In "The Ring and the Book," Browning shows the true nature of sin, and Tennyson does the same in the "Idyls of the King." They suggest the foulness, iniquity, bitterness and miserable consequences of sin, to make it forbidding. And they gain their end. Hatred for sin develops in the soul that is in sympathy with them.

The sinfulness of sin is made clear.

In the Bible, in much stronger and more pointed words of derision, denunciation and judgment, the sinfulness of the wicked is condemned. The sinners are likened to slaves, blind men, lepers, dogs and silly sheep. They are like the "kine of Bashan," "the beasts that perish." They are feeders on husks, and "whitened sepulchres" all foul within. They are suffering from the dropsical swellings of pride, the paralysis of the will, the malaria of the heart, and the tuberculosis of the character. They are in a state of delirium, not recognizing the awful risks they are taking, the glorious opportunities they are refusing, and the seraphic music and heavenly land-

scape they are missing. Sinful man is held up as the blackest monster of the world. He polluted Eden, befouled the immortal nature of the race, blasted the world and crucified the Christ. His sin is an abomination in the sight of God, and its wages is death. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Ps. 9:17); "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

Judgment
is re-
vealed.

3. The poets call attention to the judgment upon sin which brings punishment in the present. They endeavor also to awake a feeling of

"Time flowing in the middle of the night,
And all things creeping to a day of doom."

Tennyson, in "The Vision of Sin," shows divine retribution slowly gathering,—

"God made himself an awful rose of dawn
Unheeded : and detaching, fold by fold,
From those still heights, and, slowly drawing
near,
A vapor heavy, hueless, formless, cold,
Came floating on for many a month and year,
Unheeded."

The little maid in "Guinevere" sings solemnly,

“ Late, late, so late! and dark the night and chill !
Late, late, so late! but we can enter still.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

No light had we : for that we do repent;
And learning this the bridegroom will relent.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

No light: so late! and dark and chill the night!
O let us in, that we may find the light!
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

Have we not heard the bridegroom is so sweet ?
O let us in, though late, to kiss his feet!
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.”

This motive of fear is a proper one to use, and sanely used is a good corrective. The Bible reveals the inflexible justice of God. He desires and orders that all men's thoughts, words and deeds, that their whole life, be in harmony with holiness. Failure on man's part brings its own reward of ruin. God's firmness is not vindictiveness. Fire comforts; but, crossed, it burns. Electricity serves; but, crossed, it deals a death-shock. Holiness perfects; but, crossed, it shrivels and destroys the soul. The certainty of retribution for sin glares out from every part of the Bible. It reminds men of a constant reckoning of their good and evil doings; and, in addition, its trumpet tones call their attention to a day on which an awful tribunal will be

inaugurated. With terrible dashes it portrays the approach of doom, and the assembled culprits before the bar of God. The Judge, impartial, omniscient and omnipotent is on the throne, and the books are opened. "We must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10); "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing-floor; and he will gather his wheat into the garner, but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire" (Matt. 3:12).¹

Shows
unat-
tained
possibili-
ties.

4. The possibilities of knowledge, character and work, which man is capable of attaining to, is a strong motive with the poets. Tennyson makes *Maud's* lover long

"And ah for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be."

The Bible uses this motive with tremendous power. It brings the readers face to face with their Maker, who is "glorious in holiness;" who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look

¹ On the General Judgment see Matt. 25; Lk. 13; Acts 2:19-21; 2 Pet. 3:7-12; Jude 14, 15; Rev. 6:15-17; 20:11-15. On the basis of judgment see Ezek. 18; Lk. 12:47, 48; 13:6-9; 19:12-27; John 3:19, 20; 15:22-24; Rom. 2:5-12; 1 Cor. 3:8-15; Gal. 6:5-10; Heb. 10:26-30.

on iniquity;" and then urges "Ye shall be holy; for I Jehovah your God am holy" (Lev. 19:2); "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48); "But like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living" (1 Pet. 1:15). Not only the explicit statements impress this, but also the examples of saintly men and women who walked with God.

The Bible makes God's goodness and mercy, and one's own higher possibilities, but present sinful condition, so real; and the firmness of God and certain punishment for sin so evident, that repentance is brought on. Sin assumes its real character and is seen in all its blackness; and it is heartily hated and renounced. The effects of sin on others appear in their destructive and cumulative character; and the soul is filled with remorse, sorrow and the desire to make restitution. The weakness and corruption of the heart, which make one the slave of sin and an ingrate towards God, become manifest, creating self-reproach and humility, and causing him to cry out, "I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

Motive
power of
the
vision.

'Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest" (Ps. 51: 3, 4).¹

II. *It works Faith.*

The poets are right in using motives other than those which will aid in making the sinner penitent. The one in sin cannot be fully lifted out of it until he sees that he is loved. That alone implants the trust that removes the feeling of guilt and bestows peace and confidence. It was Arthur's love that completed Guinevere's redemption. Browning pictures David playing for Saul, but it was not the soft and dreamy tune he used to play to the sheep at folding time; not the seductive strains which used to entrance the birds and wild animals; not those songs which spoke of fellowship, work, death and marriage; of life's tears and triumphs; of fame and influence; but the song of God's love, as revealed in the incarnate Saviour that could

"snatch Saul the mistake,
Saul the failure, the ruin he seems now,—and bid
him awake."

¹ See Leonard Woods, *Literary and Theological Review*, vol. 1, pp. 400 ff.

“ O Saul it shall be
 A face like my face that receives thee ; a Man like
 to me,
 Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever : a Hand
 like this hand
 Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee ! See
 the Christ stand ! ”

When the Bible is producing repentance, it is at the same time causing faith to spring up, and this by means of the vision of God's love which it burns into the soul. Indeed to be precise one must say that the love as well as the holiness of God produces repentance, and the holiness as well as the love produces faith.

1. The love of God is shown in His *long-suffering* towards Israel. They rebelled in the Wilderness, turned to idolatry in Canaan, disregarded the prophets, played the flatterer to the Babylonian ruler, yet they were not cast off.

Shows
 God's
 patient
 love.

The history of individuals shows the same thing. Given opportunities for development and service by God, they reached, at the best, but a partial growth. To many of his servants he gave great talents, but they were often disused or diverted from their proper use. Many were tyrannical, hideously criminal and degradingly selfish. Many more were bitter op-

ponents of his servants. But for each and all of them there was a patient waiting. Balaam, who prostituted his great talents; his servant David, who shamefully transgressed; and Saul, who persecuted the followers of Christ, were not forsaken. The hundreds, who doubted, who threw away their opportunities, who resisted God's appeals, and whose history is recorded in the Bible, but emphasize that which he is most anxious men should feel—the long-suffering of God. The saints of Scripture insist that they have experienced it. And God himself declares, “For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off” (Isa. 48:9).

Shows
God's
gifts.

2. Argument and illustration are exhausted in the appeal to sinners to behold *the grace of God*.

The bountiful provisions of nature are his gifts, and they are bestowed regardless of merit. The sins of men do not stop his love, and cause him to withhold his treasures. “He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5:45).

One of the great burdens of Scripture is

the message of the nearness of God. No mountain of good deeds and ceremonies has to be climbed before he can be reached. He does not wait to be coaxed, cajoled or placated before he draws near. He is within men. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

God gives new life to men. He enlightens the dark, cleanses the foul, ennobles the mean, mends the broken, straightens the crooked, restores the sick and brings home the lost. None is so degraded that he cannot lift, and none so prodigal that he is not anxious to banquet. He takes men not only out of the pit and the miry clay, but also out of respectable worldliness.

3. The Bible does not reveal God as a cold Being who is indifferent to the sins of men. He is everywhere represented as *One who feels the sins of the world*. By figurative language and in other ways his sorrow, anguish and compassion are made manifest, and his hatred of sin revealed. But rising above his suffering, and his hatred for sin are his actual, triumphant struggle against sin, and his confidence of ultimate victory.

Reveals
God's
atone-
ment.

In these aspects of atoning love God appears from the first. These attitudes be-

come clearer and clearer, until at last they are seen in all their fulness and power in the mangled brow, the pierced side and the bleeding hands and feet of Christ on Calvary.

Pardon
and as-
surance
testified
to.

4. The love of God is so generous and magnanimous that he *forgives* the past sins of his children who come to him, and banishes them into oblivion. Upon their repentance and faith, which he graciously propagates in them by his atonement, he remits and pardons without dragging his justice in the dust. And not only does he pardon, but he bestows the assurance of being pardoned, which brings "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." All the saints concur with the Psalmist in his testimony,

"He hath not dealt with us after our sins,
Nor rewarded us after our iniquities.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
So great is his lovingkindness toward them that
fear him.

As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath he removed our transgressions from
us." (Ps. 103:10-12.)

God's invi-
tation
an-
nounced.

5. His long-suffering and atonement God *impresses* upon the world with all earnestness and anxiety, both by word and

example. His forgiveness of sins and gifts of life he *proffers* to all, and urges with divine sincerity and yearning. With invitations loud, repeated and loving he calls to every human being without exception.

“ Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price ” (Isa. 55:1).

“ Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ” (Matt. 11:28).

“ And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come : he that will, let him take the water of life freely ” (Rev. 22:17).

The full vision of God's love given in the Bible is irresistible, it works faith. It instils in men unbounded confidence in him who is mighty and willing to save. The fortress of the soul is surrendered. The weight of guilt, which mere works could not lift, is removed. There comes a peace within through the trust that he will nullify or control the effects of past sins on others. Joy reigns in the assurance that he will keep the faithful forever.

Motive
power of
the
vision.

“ O Jehovah of hosts,

Blessed is the man that trusteth in thee ” (Ps. 84:12).

III. *It Works Righteousness.*

The righteous life, which the great poetic seers inspire, is the large life, which is in tune with the worthy finite, and thus "in tune with the infinite;" the serene and optimistic life which is conscious of the "murmurs and scents of the infinite sea" and which can say,

" See! In the rocks of the world
Marches the host of mankind,
A feeble, wavering line.
Where are they tending?—A God
Marshall'd them, gave them their goal;"

the helpful life which desires,

" Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
And be a friend to man."

The Word of God is the great instrument for the animating and vitalizing influence of the divine on character. A new habit of life develops contemporaneously with the development of repentance and faith. As the old is being put off the new is being put on.

Worship.

1. The sympathetic reader is constrained to give to God the place which is rightly his. He venerates him as the Unchangeable, Eternal, Almighty and Holy; above the things which he has made; the

Source and the End of all. He sets him apart from the forces of the world; he is a Person, feeling, obeying, commanding, executing, wise, just, good and true. God is in the movements of nations, races and institutions producing progress in law, service, culture and morals. The great experiences of the individual, his holier activities and his loftier states are due to the presence of God permeating his life. The Scriptures in every part build upon a spirit of reverence for the holy God, the Infinite, Unseen and Ineffable.

This reverence finds direct outward expression in praise, prayer and Bible-study. The loftiness, beauty, strength and heart of God are so overpowering that, instinctively, the reader's lips frame words of adoration. The psalmists, prophets and apostles, in company with the hosts of heaven, are so constant and so fervent, that he is swept into harmony with them as they hymn their anthems to Jehovah's glory. The nearness of God is made so manifest that he is drawn into contact with the living fountain of force, life, morals and spirit, in a filial attitude of receptivity, longing and expectancy. He is filled with love and holy fear in the presence of life in

man and nature. The first glimpses are so entrancing, and the first taste so sweet, that the Bible makes itself his daily portion; and as the days go by his faithful guide in all matters of truth and righteousness.

Creed.

2. A connected system of fundamental truths quietly but firmly takes root in the mind of every Bible student. The great essentials which determine attitudes and acts are stamped upon the mind, and built up into its every fibre. Room is left for differences upon matters of mere opinion, but there is a warp of principles, plain and incontestable, upon which the web of good life is woven. In no obscure portion, the interpretation of which may be questioned, but on every page, and as clear as day, are the ever recurring ideas of the sinfulness of all men, the need of forbearance, grace, forgiveness and renewal, the possibilities of manhood, the holiness and love of God, the fact of divine help, obligation to God and man, the transience of the present, the permanence of the future, and the continuity of character.

Conduct.

3. Paul, in bidding farewell to the elders of Ephesus, said, "And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his

grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). Writing to Timothy, he asserts that the Scriptures make a man "furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:17). Our Lord, praying for his disciples, said, "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Because of intellectual powers quickened, mental associations enriched, imagination kindled, judgment broadened, and executive energy of the will stimulated, the new man is wonderfully helped in self-government, self-direction and self-attainment. The noble ideal, of life revolving about a centre outside of self, awakens the dormant spirit of self-sacrifice, and drives him into every enterprise calculated to better the world, making of him a sheltering rock and an ark-bearer in the flood. The passive virtues of endurance, patience, forgiveness and meekness, wrought also by the Bible, work beneficent influences on his fellows, and rank him with the immortals.¹

In the production of this life of reverent worship, sound doctrine, and good conduct, **Impressive exam- ples.**

¹ See on "Righteousness" W. R. Harper, *Religion and the Higher Life*, chap. xi.

the admonitions of the Bible against sin are strongly buttressed by the repulsive acts of its notorious evil-doers. Its righteous precepts are mightily supported by the examples of its towering characters.

Wicked
men.

Two lives wrecked by sin we call attention to for illustration.

The first is King Saul. Brightness, courage, hope and happiness mark his beginning; his career closes in melancholy, gloom, suspicion, envy and distraction. From the summit of greatness and power, this richly-gifted youth tumbles down into a gulf of wreckage and ruin. Beginning in the shepherd's cot, he passes to the king's palace, and then his life ends a miserable suicide amid the clang of battle. His memory is a monument of the devastation wrought by self-sufficiency, impatience, and disobedience.

The second is Haman. In this man, one of the blackest characters of the Old Testament, there is raised an eternal finger of warning against the so-regarded simple sin of vanity. The awful evolution of that sin in character, and its disastrous issue, are revealed in the life of Haman. From vanity there arose jealousy; jealousy produced hatred; hatred developed into mal-

ice; and malice, leaping beyond all bounds, was brought up with a jerk by the moral order of things, which says to sin, "Thus far but no farther."

From the long list of worthies, whose lives give such a charm to the Book, we select but a few. Upright
men.

Moses looms up above his generation, and forever stands as an inspiration for succeeding ages. Here was a mature, educated and capable man who forsook the luxuries, refinements and magnificence of the imperial palace, at the call of duty, honor and patriotism. He chose, in preference to ease, pleasure and softness, the life that demanded endurance. All his great powers were given to the task of creating a godly nation. And God, whose presence he so wonderfully enjoyed, at last miraculously took him.

Nehemiah, patriotic, prayerful, prudent and positive, as he creates national enthusiasm, roots out internal dissensions, drives back the attacks of enemies, and courageously rebuilds Jerusalem, men are forced to admire and emulate.

Daniel, whose wisdom led him to behold God's hand in the glorious past of Israel; whose holy insight led him to hear the

songs of praise arise again from the sacred heights of Zion; whose courage and integrity made him see the ruler's demand as wicked, and made him scorn to do him homage, puts trust and daring into every one who knows him.

Time would fail to speak of Abraham, Joseph, David, Paul, John and many more whose names are great, and the numberless nameless ones. One is thrilled with holy virtues by such men as Gideon's three hundred, who "stood, every man in his place," and who were "faint, yet pursuing" (Judg. 7, 8); by David's "mighty men of valor, men trained for war, that could handle shield and spear; whose faces were like the faces of lions, and they were as swift as the roes upon the mountains had understanding of the times, could set the battle in array and were not of double heart" (1 Chron. 12); and by those who "had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword: they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (of whom the

world was not worthy) ” . . . (Heb. 11:36-38).

Thus by living illustrations the Bible draws men away from sin, and powerfully works in them a life of righteousness.

CHAPTER X.

COMFORT.

PAIN of body, mind and heart, misfortune and death are universal experiences. That which proves to be an antidote or a relief is always regarded as a boon. Of these the Bible is chief. Ernest Renan called it "the consolation of humanity." Paul recognized one of its main features when he spoke of the "comfort of the Scriptures" (Rom. 15:4). For several thousand years, generation after generation have found here the waters of rest, whose gentle murmurs quell every fearsome agitation, soothe every painful pang, and reduce to harmony all conflicting thoughts.

I. *When Sin Weighs Heavily.*

The crushing sense of sin.

When one sees God's holiness over against his own sinfulness; the unclean generation about him in need, and the little he has done for them; the possibilities of self unattained, his opportunities squan-

dered, his ordained end unfulfilled; and the woful and increasing effects of his evil deeds on others, beyond his control, the sense of sin comes crushingly. An unquenchable fire and an undying worm forever burn and gnaw within. The ghosts of memory haunt the trembling sinner. Every Herod looks for a return of a John the Baptist, and every Macbeth's hands are red with blood. Recourse may be had to the inebriating cup, the maddening whirl of pleasure, or the frenzy of finance, but there will be no lasting peace. Weeping will be renewed, and the gnashing of teeth will continue.

The Bible is the only channel of relief. True relief. Through it the sinner learns of atonement, repentance, faith, reconciliation, peace and joy. It holds out an offer of God's pardoning mercy for even the worst of sinners. There is held up from first to last the vision of a God, "who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies" (Ps. 103: 3, 4). It holds up a Mediator between God and men, "whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done

aforetime, in the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:25); "who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification" (Rom. 4:25); who "while we were yet sinners died for us" (Rom. 5:8); who "since the children are sharers in flesh and blood, also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:14, 15); who "once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26). There is unimpeachable testimony brought forward as to God's love for all men; his anxiety for their salvation; his ready forgiveness of the sins of every penitent and trusting soul; and his gentle restoration of every wrecked and ruined life.

The repeated declarations work themselves into the most sin-tortured spirit, and bring a soothing, because a healing, balm.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18); "I

have redeemed thee; I have called thee. . . . I will be with thee. . . . I have loved thee. . . . I will bring thy seed and gather thee" (Isa. 43:1-5); "I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions" (Isa. 43:25); "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands" (Isa. 49:16); "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink" (John 7:37); "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house" (Acts 16:31).

These confident assertions, sent forth to all men without discrimination create a faith-producing trust in God, which brings peace.

And, to add to the comfort of him who has been relieved of the burden of sin, the Bible extends the assurance that the forgiving God is also a keeping and a present God. Assurance.

"My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. 12:9); "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20); "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35, 37-39).

II. *In the Anguish of Anxiety.*

For
earthly
goods.

1. The larder is almost empty, the children are sick, and work is hard to find. The father is almost frantic, with the fear of the pinch of poverty, and starvation. It may be an old man who cannot work, whose support is gone, and who faces the chills of winter. His heart fills with dread as the days pass. Perhaps it is a growing maiden, whose spirit fails at the report of her father's bankruptcy, with its prospect of coming penury. Or perchance it is a man engrossed in business concerns who cannot sleep nights, worrying over his vast interests, and the risks of losing them. To one and all of the great host of men, women and children, who are suffering in their anxiety over earthly goods, the Bible can be a comfort.

“The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger;
But they that seek Jehovah shall not want any
good thing” (Ps. 34:10).

“I have been young, and now am old;
Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his seed begging bread” (Ps. 37:25).

“Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold the birds of the heaven, that they

sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life? And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." (Matt. 6:25-34.)

2. Conscientious men and women are frequently in great anxiety concerning habits of theirs, or certain acts, or contemplated doings. The Scriptures lay down general principles for our guidance, and there are in it sufficient detailed examples to enable people to walk uprightly. There are comprehensive discussions of all vital courses of action; such, for example, as those on love (1 Cor. 13), on giving (2 Cor. 8 and 9), on faith (Heb. 11 and 12),

Concern-
ing con-
duct.

and on speech (James 3). In the Sermon on the Mount different virtues are made plain. Everywhere in the Bible the supremacy of the things of the spirit to the things of the flesh is insisted on. Pleasure, wealth, etc., are secondary, but they are not to be disregarded. The example of the life of Jesus is a corrective for over-asceticism. His commands inculcate shrewdness as well as piety; a masterly use of all the world's resources instead of a monastic attitude towards them. (Luke 16: 8, 9). The reader will not have much difficulty in finding the course of conduct to follow which will allow peace of mind.

Man is not
small be-
cause the
earth is.

3. The invention of the telescope has been followed by great changes in the ideas of men regarding the earth. It is no more the centre of the universe. It is but a small planet, in a small system, out upon the rim of creation. With this change of view, there has with many been a consequent disturbance of theological conceptions. Men ask, "Of what importance are the creatures which live on a little spot of earth on the far frontier of things? Can it be possible that God would bother about them so much as to send his Son to live as one of them in that distant, insignificant part for over

thirty years?" To men thus disturbed the Bible brings a satisfying answer. Man is worth while, wherever he dwells. The decline in the earth's importance does not carry with it a decline in man's supremacy.

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;
What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man, that thou visitest him?
For thou hast made him but little lower than God,
And crownest him with glory and honor.
Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;
Thou hast put all things under his feet:
All sheep and oxen,
Yea, and the beasts of the field,
The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
Whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." (Ps. 8:3-8.)

"The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified with him" (Rom. 8:16, 17).

"Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him." . . . (1 John 3:2.)

4. The relation of God to evil is a question of sore perplexity to many who

God is not
tarnished
by evil.

love him. They are afraid that the existence of sin in the world involves his holiness, and brings a tarnish upon it. The Word of God describes the world as the best possible world, "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). The evil was not made by God. He is shown in every age, and among every people, as hating it, helping men against it, and striving to have men destroy it. It is revealed as a concomitant of freedom in limited, human beings. A way of triumph over it, through the grace of God, is indicated.

Faith has
a cure
for the
world's
inequal-
ities.

5. Still another matter, which causes grave anxiety, is the apparent inequalities of men. The questions are boldly stated in Job, the Psalms and Ecclesiastes. Why do the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper? Why are not the sinful recompensed? These questions are asked to-day with as much earnestness as in those days.

The Bible brings peace here too. The element of faith is brought to bear upon men, so that the appearances of life are reversed in the light and perspective of eternity. Suffering is transformed into a discipline for greater glory.

“ Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth:
Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the
Almighty.

For he maketh sore, and bindeth up;
He woundeth and his hands make whole”
(Job. 5: 17, 18).¹

Inequalities which continue through this life will be balanced by rewards and retributions in the next. God is powerful and just and loving. Mutual burden-bearing, and suffering because of others, are inescapable in earthly society. They may be blessings in disguise. But the individual will bear his own burden at the last, and ultimately all will be well.

III. *When Sore Pressed by the World.*

1. There come times when the threatened circumstances of misfortune, which cause in men the anguish of anxiety, actually develop into fact. Men lose all their possessions. The 107th Psalm is a boon to all such. How rich the Scriptures are in words of solace! There is no book like it in its power to inspire hope for better days.

Outward
misfor-
tune.

“ When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not

¹ See for fuller discussion of the subject of affliction, Job 33: 19-22; 36: 8-10; Heb. 12: 5-13; 1 Pet. 4: 12-19.

overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isa. 43:2).

"For though the fig-tree shall not flourish,
Neither shall fruit be in the vines;
The labor of the olive shall fail,
And the fields shall yield no food;
The flock shall be cut off from the fold,
And there shall be no herd in the stalls:
Yet I will rejoice in Jehovah,
I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Hab.
3:17, 18).

Tempta-
tion.

2. The Saviour found in God's word a foil for the tempter. "It is written" was the counter-thrust that reached the Satanic vitals. One of the necessary parts of the Christian armor, which Paul mentioned, was "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." It is a powerful and effective aid against temptations of all kinds. It never fails in stilling the tempest.

Severer
persecu-
tions.

3. The Bible affords comfort for men who are persecuted by their fellow men.

When believers suffer for their beliefs their only source of comfort is the Word. The second is "a psalm of good heart in hard times." It was used by the apostles; sung at the siege of Jerusalem; a favorite hymn in the First Crusade; found by Athanasius to be "a trumpet call against

the enemies of the faith;" and recited by Savonarola when Florence was in her greatest peril.¹ The experiences of such men in Old Testament times as Joseph and Daniel, and their heroic endurance, will give moral sinews, that enable a man to stand fast. The example of Jesus in his trial and crucifixion has always been the supreme support of his followers, making of the rack a downy bed. It so comforted Paul that he would not change his fetters for Nero's purple and gems. See 2 Cor. 1:5. The early Christians, as well as Christians in all the ages since, were specially comforted in their persecutions by the thought of the second coming of Christ, and the glories which are to follow. Loyalty to the Master, which the Bible creates, will make one think it not too much to suffer for him, who suffered so much for us. "They therefore departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name" (Acts 5:41). When John Huss was about to be burned, and they placed the cap painted with demons on his head, he said, "Most joyfully will I wear this crown of shame

¹ C. L. Marson, "The Psalms at Work," p. 3.

for thy sake, O Jesus, who for me didst wear a crown of thorns." The persecuted will find a wreath of glory for their brow in such a passage as, "They found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to go with them, that he might bear his cross" (Matt. 27:32).¹

Envy,
malice
and
calumny.

4. There is that in the Scriptures which is able to make one bear cheerfully uncharitableness in every form, whether it be envy, malice, or calumny. There are illustrations of the persecution of the righteous in these ways, and their attitude. Our Lord was spoken of as a deceiver, blasphemer, wine-bibber, glutton, traitor, and demoniac. The manner in which he bore his persecutions is given. The fact that Jesus predicted persecution is a pledge that he knows, feels and supports the persecuted; and this is a consolation. "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household" (Matt. 10:25). His beatitude (Matt. 5:10-12) is our marching song.

Using Farrar's words, the Bible "transforms sorrow into triumph; the crown of thorns into a crown of stars; the Cross into a glory and a rod of power. It turns

¹ J. Hamilton, *The Lamp and the Lantern*, p. 117.

martyrdom into rapture, and malediction into a beatitude."

IV. *For the Pelican of the Wilderness.*

1. Loneliness is the lot of every righteous man in this world of sin. There is the loneliness of spiritual experience. In the prayerful communion of the spirit with God; in the rapture of the visions of service, near and world-wide, of "the king in his beauty" and the "land that reacheth afar;" in the ecstasy of love, there is the pain of the incommunicable. The human soul, though it might be inexpressibly entranced by the experiences of an hour on an Arctic peak amidst the eternal solitudes, would yet be, because it is human, crushed by the oppressiveness of the silence never disturbed by any warble, and the remoteness never visited by any wing. The place where every man finally assumes his responsibilities definitely, and determines his life purpose, is a wilderness.

Loneliness
of spiritual
experience.

There is the loneliness of those who are misunderstood and unsupported. The reformer's motives are often misinterpreted. He has the sense of being forsaken. Others lack his enthusiasm, and hesitate to uphold

Reformers.

his hands. He has to tread the wine-press alone, till his garments are blood-red.

Unre-
quited
love hard
to bear.

The loneliness of unrequited love is another condition needing comfort. Missionaries, ministers, parents, sisters and brothers feel it, when they lovingly yearn for the salvation of the indifferent; rulers feel it, and the servants of the people, when their self-sacrifice is recompensed with thoughtless and base ingratitude.

To all such the Bible brings comfort. It shows the glory of the life that is lonely because uniquely great. The poet, the philosopher, and the saint have their compensating joys. It presents the example of Jesus, praying alone, struggling alone, enduring alone, and triumphing alone; but these are only the dark background. The real portrait is that of a Victor, waving his sword over the prostrate form of a vanquished enemy, and rapturously exclaiming, "It is finished."

Away from
home.

2. The Bible provides comfort for those separated from their friends by distance, years, and change. What visions of early days it brings back to us, when we are severed far from home and brothers, and the parents we loved dearly lie beneath the sod! We are once again surrounding

the evening table. The psalm is sung. We now find the chapter, and read verse by verse in rotation. We smile yet over a mispronounced name. The memory gives pain in one sense, yet provides more than relief in the sense of sweet companionship. It carries us away to some of the dearest scenes and friends of time.¹

What a comfort this book is in bereavement! When the night closes in on one because the light of his life has been taken away, what can he do?

Bereave-
ment.

In the Scriptures there are instructive examples of the way he should act. It shows him Aaron with bowed head and silent tongue when his two sons were stricken with death; the woman of Shunem answering Gehazi's question, "Is it well with the child?" with the words "It is well," though her heart was breaking, because her son, at the time, was lying in an upper chamber dead; and Ezekiel in his sorrow, submissive and still.

In that dark hour the touch of a friend's elbow is a God-sent support, but it cannot fully cure. Through the Bible the greatest consolation comes. It speaks of a kind

¹ See R. E. Prothero, *The Psalms in Human Life*, pp. 4, 5.

purpose, continued existence, resurrection, reunion, and glory.

“ Jehovah gave, and Jehovah hath taken away; blessed be the name of Jehovah ” (Job 1:21).

“ In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you ” (John 14:2).

“ I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die ” (John 11:25, 26).

“ These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they ? . . . These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes ” (Rev. 7:13-17).

V. *When the Arm of Flesh Faileth.*

Sickness.

1. In the time of physical weakness, when human power comes face to face with its own weakness and insufficiency; when the best food cannot tempt the palate; when the best air cannot conjure into health the wasting lungs, what can comfort? Is there

any effectual antidote for the bitter ingredient of the cup of physical suffering? Is there anything to assuage the misery when the tramp of the foot of death is audible? It cannot be found in the latest volume of essays, history or fiction. It can be found in the Bible. The experiences of the faithful which it records implant new vigor, "My flesh and my heart faileth; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Ps. 73:26). The promise, "Jehovah will support him upon the couch of languishing: Thou makest all his bed in his sickness" (Ps. 41:3), is encouraging. Such a Psalm as the hundred and twenty-first sends strength and peace into the troubled heart.¹

2. In many experiences all through Death. life men need comfort, but above all when life on earth is closing, and they are moving down into the lampless valley. Then it is that the Bible gives supreme consolation. It affords "provision for the last journey through the wilderness, and passage over Jordan." The soft breathings of the psalmist, the gentle words of our Saviour, the confident tones of the apostle, and the entrancing vision of the apocalyp-

¹ See J. Hamilton, *Lamp and Lantern*, pp. 124-126.

tic seer steady the feet and clarify the sight. The heavenward traveler can see One like unto the Son of man walking by his side; and beyond the swelling flood rise the sweet scenes of the New Jerusalem,—the pearly gates, the crystal river, the tree of life, the elders round the throne, and ten thousand times ten thousand, dressed in robes of white, singing, “Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing” (Rev. 5:12).

The sting of death is removed by the victory which the eternal life bestowed by Christ gives. There is an assurance of immortality in the records of Enoch and Elijah, who did not taste death; and of Samuel who though absent was still alive. Isaiah teaches that the dead live and are interested in the works of those on earth. (Isa. 14:9, 10). Daniel in the twelfth chapter, and Paul in 1 Cor. 15, affirm immortality and a resurrection. Identity, recognition, memory, reunion, knowledge, faith, hope, love, etc., are spoken of. But above all comforts is the confidence begotten by the words of our Master, and the truth taught by his own resurrection.

John Knox on his death-bed had 1 Cor. 15 read to him. He also called for John 17 remarking, "Since there I have cast my anchor." He believed that the prayer, "Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory" (v. 24), would be answered. Edward Irving quoted the twenty-third Psalm in Hebrew shortly before he died.¹

"The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want.

He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: he leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

My soul he doth restore again;
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
Ev'n for his own Name's sake.

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill;
For thou art with me, and thy rod
And staff me comfort still.

My table thou hast furnishèd
In presence of my foes;
My head thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows.

Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me:
And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be."

¹ Marson, *The Psalms at Work*, p. 33.

CHAPTER XI.

JESUS CHRIST.

THE Bible has many singularly attractive features, but the most charming of all is Jesus Christ. He is the central figure of the Book. It revolves about him. He is its theme. Our words cannot do justice to the portrait; at the most they can but send the reader back to the Scriptures to gaze again at our adorable Lord.

I. *His Wonderful Personality.*

1. In this matchless life there is the picture of man at his best. This is "the Son of man," the chiefest of the race.

A real
man.

There were the unmistakable marks of real humanity in him. He had the limitations, weaknesses and necessities of the finite being. He ate, slept, hungered, thirsted, and became fatigued. He got knowledge through the brain and senses. He disclaimed knowledge of certain facts. He was at times disappointed. He was

dependent on God for strength and growth. Communion with the Father in prayer was a necessity, and human sympathy was a comfort to him. "Would ye also go away?" and "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" are questions which show a need of the touch of the elbow in times of loneliness.

But the limitations were not human imperfections. His manhood was perfect.¹

In the Gospels we get a glimpse of what Bishop Hendrix calls "insight, farsight and foresight" at their highest. He understood what was in man, and was able to set it forth clearly, vividly and concisely. He knew man in all his relations and duties. He had philosophic insight into the nature and foundation of the world. He presented anew the way of regarding the universe as the utterance of God, his medium of revelation. He was both original and profound, in his claim that truth is not a merely intellectual thing, but a living thing. It is life, and hence makes a moral claim on man, and obeyed gives freedom. He went beyond all who preceded him, when he treated the soul and body as a unit, as inseparable parts of self. The body in its

Intel-
lectual
power.

¹ See Brooks, *The Influence of Jesus*, pp. 36 ff, 86 ff, 154 ff, 219 ff, on Jesus' powers.

essence is never parted from the soul. It is to be redeemed and glorified as well as the soul. There is a resurrection for the body which is glorious, just as there is a glorious immortality for the soul. Our admiration is called forth, not only by this wonderful depth which is so hard for us to follow, but by the remarkable alertness with which he forestalled his opponents, exposed their fallacies and wrong attitudes, and confused them with rapid-fire questions. His practical wisdom in providing a way to carry on the gospel is marvelous.

Emotional
power.

Jesus showed the rarest emotional powers. He was most sensitive and responsive to the joys and sorrows of life. His revulsion of feelings in the presence of evil, and his delight in the good, show perfectly developed moral sensibilities. His cheerfulness, optimism and spontaneous sympathy reveal the social side rounded out. Even the physical side of his life shows a perfect harmony with the world of joy and pain.

Will
power.

The symmetry of his powers makes him unique among men. The energy of his will is no less noticeable than his intellect and emotions. He had self-assertiveness, resolution, courage, vigor and

power at their utmost. The inholding powers of self-restraint, prudence, caution and patience he also possessed in their fulness.

He was a perfect Man; perfect in his individuality and in his relations; perfect in his parts and in his aims. He lived above self and race, above conditions and time. His humanity was a perfect vehicle for the Holy Spirit.

He was perfect.

2. But we gaze in greater wonder because the Bible speaks of him as "the Son of God."

There is an instinctive seeking for a Divine Redeemer in the Old Testament. Jesus and his apostles claim that he is the One the prophets sought.

The Old Testament had an instinct for Christ.

In God's address to the serpent, "He shall bruise thy head" (Gen. 3:15), Adam heard of One coming. Noah heard of One that was to "dwell in the tents of Shem" (Gen. 9:27). Abraham looked forward to One in whom "shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). Jacob was persuaded that

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
Until that he come whose it is,
And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples
be" (Gen. 49:10, Syriac Version).

Moses told Israel, "Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken" (Deut. 18:15). To David the promise was given that God would "establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (2 Sam. 7:13). Isaiah looked for a suffering "Servant;" Jeremiah, for "the Lord our righteousness;" Ezekiel, for a "Shepherd;" Daniel, for "One like unto a son of man;" Haggai, for "the Desire of all nations;" Zechariah, for "the Branch;" and Malachi, for "the messenger."

In the Old Testament, as we have shown in Chapter VIII, the personality, sufferings, teachings, etc., of the Messiah were foretold.

Jesus and
apostles
claimed
its fulfil-
ment.

Jesus and his apostles claimed that the whole Old Testament referred to him. Upon reading a passage from Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth, he said, "To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). Luke records that when he walked with the perplexed disciples on the Emmaus road that "beginning from Moses and from all the prophets he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (24:27).

On the first visit to the eleven after his resurrection, he said, "These are my words which I spake unto you that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:44). Matthew and John refer often to incidents in the life of Jesus which fulfil prophecy.

Claims for his pre-existence and equality with God were also made by himself and the apostles. The apostles further affirmed that through him all things were created. "Before Abraham was born, I am" (John 8:58); "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5); "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30); "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1); "Of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. 9:5); "who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or

Pre-existence and equality with God claimed.

powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist.”¹

Titles and names.

The titles and names given to him, in both the Old and New Testaments, give an idea of the superhuman character attributed to him by the various writers. There are no less than eighty of these titles and names. More than seventy of them cannot be applied to man.

All claims substantiated.

All claims are substantiated by his life. He fulfilled all prophecy. We see in him what we worship in God. We can imagine no excellence in God that was not in Christ. It would be strange if all that was claimed for him were not so.

He was sinless.

His birth, works, resurrection and ascension have about them the atmosphere of the supernatural, but it is a congruous whole, for in him there was the miracle of character. He was sinless. “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me” (John 4:34); “I do always the things that are pleasing to him” (John 8:29). The apostles call him holy, just, pure, spotless

¹ See also Mt. 7:21-23; 10:32, 33; 11:27; 13:40-43; 16:13-18; 19:27-29; 23:8-10; 25:31-33; 28:16-20; Mk. 2:5-12; 12:1-9; 13:24-32; 14:60-64; Lk. 2:49; John 1:49-51; 3:13-18; 4:11-12; 5:16-47; 6:25-66; 8:12-59; 9:35-38; 11:22-39; 12:25-27; 13:44-50; 14; 16:1-5; 20:17.

and without guile. "But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One" (Acts 3:14); "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Pet. 2:22); "Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). The malefactor on the cross, the centurion and Judas confessed that Jesus was sinless.

As we look at him we are constrained to say with Thomas, "My Lord and my God." We do not doubt that all things were made and are upheld by him, Atlantic, Rockies, moon, sun and stars. We do not wonder at the confession of the apostles, martyrs and reformers. We have no fear that all knees will bow to him, American, African and Chinese. We believe in his promise, "Lo, I am with you always," and we pray.

Consistent portrait, consistent in its inconsistency, but oh, how wonderful! Harnack says, "Christ's personality is his secret and no psychology can fathom it." The limitations of the finite, the perfection of humanity, and the glory of God, all in one. The world has stood transfixed before this compound picture of the Child in the manger, the Man who spake as never man spake, and him who hushed the tempest and bade the boisterous waves of

A congruous whole though diverse.

Galilee be still. And there forever it will stand, and while it stands it worships.

II. *His Lovable Character.*

His strong
words
born of
love and
right.

There was not a thorn, not a rough, jutting point in the disposition of Jesus. He was never gruff, never cruel, never unkind, in look or word. It is true that men's good demanded that he should tell them plainly what they lacked. His eye flashed at times with righteous indignation. He denounced hypocrisy. But he loved men. Those occasions on which he may seem to have used harsh words were forced upon him by necessity. The language was strong, but it was not unkind. We must see the look in his face, and hear the tone of his voice, to appreciate the spirit of love behind all his words.

Tender-
ness.

1. His was a spirit of tenderness. How we are drawn to him by the little spontaneous touches, the thoughtful and graceful acts which show this spirit! It dominated his teachings; he had regard for men's immaturity, and refused to overload them. It revealed itself in his miracles; the changing of the water into wine was to spare friends the feeling of mortification. It came out in his ministry

everywhere; he was tender towards the doubter; he was kind to the children; he pitied the poor; he wept with Mary and Martha. It was not crushed out by his last agony; in the Garden of Gethsemane he gratuitously healed the ear of Malchus; in the judgment-hall he looked on Peter with a sad eye; on the cross he affectionately remembered his mother.

The beauty of the patient spirit that was in him grips us. With what loving patience he withstood the unbelief and scoffs of his brethren and the men of Nazareth! He was never hasty towards the disciples, dull of understanding. The abuse of rude soldiers did not cause him to lose self-control. "He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" (Isa. 53: 7). Patience.

The inexpressible tenderness and patience of Jesus are attractive because there was not a trace of weakness or cowardice in them. They were the expression of the highest manliness. A vision of his strength will reveal qualities, not only lovable in themselves, but which will give Softness
from
strength.

an inexpressible charm to the softer side of his nature.

Fortitude. 2. He was a man of great fortitude. With a noble contempt for worldly greatness, he braved the fortunes of a low condition without a murmur. The incredulity and reproach of men he endured without an expression or feeling of bitterness. He faced his trial, and suffered all the indignities which were heaped upon him, without flinching. He went to his death serenely, though he had to go alone. Considering the exquisite sensitiveness of his feelings, no wonder that his fortitude holds the world. And it holds the world because it was due to the consciousness of a life within, which could not be defeated, and not to mere Stoic endurance. It was the fortitude of goodness.

**Physical
and
moral
courage.**

See the tender and patient man drive the money-changers from the temple, undauntingly reprove sinners to their face, boldly go up to Jerusalem to the Passover at the risk of his life. There was no fear of physical injury in him. Nor did he lack moral courage. At the beginning of his ministry with a grand daring he flung his moral standard to the breeze, in his Sermon on the Mount, and challenged men

of every class to it. That standard was never lowered. In the presence of the great teacher Nicodemus, he refused to play with religious shibboleths that might please the rabbi. He never made friends at the expense of the truth. The sublimity of that courage he displayed in his remarkable stand against those who in their enthusiasm for him would make him king; in his life-long refusal to identify himself with either the authorities or the mob; and in his utter disregard of public customs which were inconsistent with righteousness. His courage was not foolhardiness nor blind, dogged tenacity; it was born of inflexible loyalty to holiness.

The world ever comes back to Jesus for fresh inspiration and healing. It sees in him the only attitude towards men which is truly lovable. Out in the hard world of conflict, men and women become bitter, and hasty, and cruel as they are overlooked, misjudged and battered. But ever and anon they come to themselves, and open their Bibles to the portrait of the Master. There he stands, sweet and strong; sweet because he was strong, and sweet because his strength could afford to be sweet. He speaks, and his word is "Peace."

The
world's
inspira-
tion and
healing.

III. *His Sufferings and Tragic Death.*

“He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,” wrote Isaiah. This view of Jesus makes the world with bowed head, moistened eyes, and throbbing heart, stand silently before him. There is in the soul of all men enough of the graces of sympathy and justice to draw them to contemplate this tragic Life with the mingled emotions of sadness and indignation.

Early
years.

1. In his early years Jesus was a sufferer. When but a child the jealous Herod heard about him, and sought his life. He had to flee to Egypt and live the life of an exile. Though the record bears no testimony to the fact, we are constrained to believe that all his years at Nazareth were not passed without suffering. Indeed we know that his brethren did not sympathize with him. We may well imagine their taunts. We can hear the scoff of the neighbors' boys, when the sinless Youth refused to join in their evil deeds. There can be no doubt that his attitude of non-resistance, of turning the other cheek, and of going the second mile, won for him many an imposition on their part. His noble spirit must have been hurt.

2. As he came to undertake his life-work, there came the keen struggle of temptation. He had to break all cords that would draw him, at the expense of moral integrity, to the fulfilment of physical desires, the pandering to popular applause, and the winning of worldly power. Here too was a painful battle.

The wilderness.

3. These sufferings were largely because of self. When his ministry began, and all through it, he suffered because of others. The pains which are due to personal inconvenience, intellectual difficulties, or definite determination of life-work and methods, are almost as nothing, when compared with the pangs which shoot through a righteous soul touched by the moral darkness, the ingratitude, the indifference and the wicked persistency in sin, of the world. There is no doubt Jesus felt this in a measure in his preparatory years, but it came upon him in all its stinging awfulness during his three years of public ministry. He came into actual touch with the dulness and worldliness of disciples and others. Murmurs and complaints, false judgments, base ingratitude and crafty snares wrung the heart of the Redeemer. The world "esteemed him not." He never

Public ministry.

wept over his own hardships, but on the brow of Olivet one day he wept for the sins of Jerusalem.

Geth-
semane.

4. There is mystery about Gethsemane. We may question as to the causes, but we cannot doubt the fact of indescribable anguish. He wrestled. His soul was "exceeding sorrowful even unto death." "His sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground." Who can fathom the enormity of the agony of the world's Saviour deciding to die for the salvation of the world?

Arrest,
trial and
the Via
Dolorosa.

5. The blackness and loneliness of the arrest, the trial and "the sorrowful way!" His soul was pierced through by the traitorous act of Judas. "All the disciples left him and fled." "Peter followed him afar off," and then denied him. He "looked and there was none to help." He "wondered that there was none to uphold." False witnesses testified to the unjust arraignment. No friend spoke in his favor. Alone against the world! Buffeted, beaten, spat upon, treated as a madman, scourged, crowned with thorns, ridiculed, he was finally sentenced. The cross was loaded on his shoulder, and out through

the streets of the city, and up the hilly slopes, he stumbled forward to die.

6. Then came Calvary. They nailed his body to the tree. He suffered the long drawn-out torturous death of crucifixion. Again he was mocked, reviled and scoffed at. The soldiers sat down and with heartless indifference "watched him there." Those who passed by "railed on him, wagging their heads." "And all his acquaintance and the women that followed with him from Galilee, stood afar off." The storms of dark perdition beat against him, and the waves of desolateness passed over him. The creature put to death his Creator, and the earth which he had made became his sepulchre.

Many men have suffered and died, but none like Jesus. He was absolutely undeserving of it. He could feel it as none could. And he was so gracious, so unresentful and so forgiving through it all. This is why the world weeps as it sees him in Gethsemane, at his trial, on the *Via Dolorosa*, and on the lonely hill.

But it is not the pathetic alone that holds our interest in the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. We behold in it the atonement of God for the sins of the

Jesus' sufferings worse than others'.

His atonement draws.

world. He gave his life "a ransom for many." "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5). The death that sent a shock though the very nerves of nature has also thrilled the world of men. The consciousness that Jesus Christ has redeemed them by his blood has brought generation after generation in ever increasing numbers to bedew their souls by gazing at the Sacrifice.

IV. *His Influence.*

The reports of the perfect manhood, the divine nature, the attractive disposition and the atonement of Jesus Christ would have been generally questioned by later ages had there not been the influence on the disciples which he did have. That influence substantiates all the rest.

The men
He
found.

What kind of men were these disciples to begin with? They were very ordinary men, from the toiling class, without much influence. Deep insight was not conspicuous in them. They were not grossly immoral in their outward acts, but they were selfish and cowardly. The things of sense, the superficial, visible,

audible, tangible world was the only one in which they really lived. They had heard of God, and in a superstitious way feared and obeyed him, but their whole life was bound up in this outward world. He was in their minds but in no vital touch with their lives. Such were these men when Jesus met them.

In after years we meet these same men. A new conception of the world has taken hold of them. God is not far off. He is near, controlling the winds and waves; in the grass and trees; giving life to the birds and beasts and caring for them; filling land and sea with life; in man's body, mind and heart; in nations and races, lifting up and laying low. God is the life of the world. He is no more a logical conception, but a Life and a Person pervading everything. They touch him every moment. They commune with him, and he refreshes their souls, and strengthens them. They know he is bringing all things on to a grand end, and doing it well; they trust him and are resigned. They have caught a vision of the world's meaning and have fallen into harmony with it. It is the expression of God and they are expected to express his righteousness.

Their
changed
view of
God.

Their new
life.

These men's personal lives have changed too. Their lives must have been in accord with their teachings since they had such wide influence through their teachings, and their manner of living must have been well known. They teach obedience and filial care in the home; faithfulness, kindness and impartiality among friends and at work; dependence on God and use of his Word in temptation; and courage, endurance and unselfishness in suffering. No hardship in a righteous cause should be shunned. Sin must be crucified. The body is the temple of God. The whole life must be lived in the ever present consciousness that man is the channel for the life of God which fills the world.

Their new
society.

We discover a new method of social life in them too. They feel themselves united to God in life. As a consequence they feel a union of purpose, and they take it to be their duty to bring God's life to light in other lives. They are "co-workers with God." To carry out this purpose and as a result of it a brotherhood, the Christian church, comes into existence, the nucleus of a clean society on earth. The social righteousness, which is in the life of the Triune God, is its law. Faith, knowl-

edge, patience, holiness, brotherly-kindness and charity are the constant practices.

A great constraint took possession of the lives of these men. The vision which they saw was overpowering. To them every life which lacked it was wasted and lost. A great hope laid hold of them too. A future loomed up in which they saw God's life having free course in every individual nation, kindred, and tongue. The glorious sight entranced them. Loyalty shot them through. They must proclaim it and give themselves unsparingly and fearlessly to its realization. And we see them do it. The little group of men went out from Jerusalem, and preached, suffered and died. But it was not in vain. Their message and their life enlightened and kindled other lives, and upturned the civilization of the world.

Their new
passion
for souls.

It was all because of Jesus Christ. They felt that he was God. They saw his immanence in nature, by the manifestation of his power in wind, wave, bread, arm, optic nerve and body. In the Resurrection, and for forty days after, they saw him use the physical world at will. In his holy and self-giving life they observed that immanent Presence

Jesus the
explana-
tion.

attaining its chief purpose. The transfiguration showed the glory of the human body and the grandeur of the future. They put these things together and arrived at their interpretation of the world and of human life, conduct and relations. The promise of the Holy Spirit and its fulfilment assured them that they were right in their assumptions.

And this immanent God was their own Jesus. It was their precious and blessed Master that wanted to come into their lives and come through them and use them. Of course they would allow him. If they had ten thousand lives they would do the same, if only they might be changed into the image of that glorious One they walked with on the Judean hills. And while life lasted they would spare no power, and dread no foe, in their effort to lead him to the throne of every human life.

There is in every human life a polarity for God. Men want to know the secret of his presence. And so long as this feeling of need exists the *magnetism of the Bible* will draw men to examine the influence on the disciples of him who said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,"—"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

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